

Mamma Mia! by PetuniaViolet

Category: IT (Movies - Muschietti), IT - Stephen King

Genre: Alternate Universe - No Pennywise (IT), Audra and Patty are Beverly's best friends, BAMF Audra, BAMF Beverly Marsh, Background Bill/Audra, Ben being a sweetheart, Bill pining after Audra, Bisexual Richie Tozier, Eddie Kaspbrak Lives, Eddie Kaspbrak Loves Richie Tozier, Engaged Stan/Patty, F/M, Gay Eddie Kaspbrak, Homophobic Language, Imagine Reddie singing 'why did it have to be me' lmao, Implied Sexual Content, In the first chapter, Inspired by Mamma Mia! (Movies), M/M, Mamma Mia! Crossover, Mamma Mia! References, Mike Hanlon is a Good Friend, Mike is ready to offer advice, Mike only shows up later oh no :(, Myra is one stinky bitch, Reddie, Repressed Homosexuality (at the beginning), Richie Tozier Loves Eddie Kaspbrak, Single dad Eddie, Single mom Beverly, Stan birdwatches, Stanley Uris Lives, bisexual richie, i wrote this at 4 am, might delete it, oh btw Eddie is 2 years older than the losers, songfics are weird to write, this is a songfic, watch out

Language: English

Characters: Ali (mamma mia), Alvin Marsh (mentioned), Audra Phillips, Ava Marsh (oc), Ben Hanscom, Beverly Marsh, Bill Denbrough, Eddie Kaspbrak, Lisa (mamma mia), Mike Hanlon, Myra Kaspbrak (mentioned), Nick Kaspbrak (oc), Patricia Blum Uris, Richie Tozier, Stanley Uris

Relationships: Ben Hanscom/Beverly Marsh, Bill Denbrough/Audra Phillips, Eddie Kaspbrak/Richie Tozier, Nick/Ava, Patricia Blum Uris/Stamley Uris, Richie Tozier/Eddie Kaspbrak, stanley uris/patricia blum uris

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Summary:

Beverly Marsh, an independent hotelier in the Greek islands, is preparing for her daughter's wedding with the help of three old friends. Meanwhile, Ava, the spirited bride, has a plan. She secretly invited three men from her mother's past with the hope of meeting her real father and having him escort her down the aisle on her big day.

Hijinks will ensue.

(incidentally, Ava also ended up matchmaking her future father-in-law with one of her possible dads)

1. Honey, Honey

Author's Note:

The whole plot is inspired by 2008's 'Mamma Mia! The Movie'.

The characters belong to Stephen King.

Lisa and Ali belong to Mamma Mia!.

Nina Marsh and Nick Kasprak belong to me.

Italic: Singing

Italic: More than one person singing

I know this isn't perfect, I wrote it on a whim and because I was emotional after re-watching the two movies.

Mid-September 1995

Kalokairi Island, Greece

If her father was here, he would slap her across the face and call her a famished whore – nothing like her dear, deceased mother had been. But she couldn't imagine someone so evil as Alvin Marsh stepping onto this paradise.

But Beverly Marsh didn't care. She was content, for now. And even though the ache she felt in her heart didn't match her serene expression, she still watched the esthetic sunset over the horizon of the Aegean Sea with a blissful smile that quite didn't reach her eyes.

Beverly Marsh was a beautiful, twenty-year-old young woman. She had milky skin with a spray of freckles across her cheeks and nose, reddish auburn hair that fell on her back like a waterfall and sparkling blue eyes that rivaled the clear sea surrounding the island.

As she watched the sky create pink and orange hues, Beverly inhaled slowly before placing her hand over her stomach and exhaling, "They're all gone, it's just you and me now, little one."

Beverly Marsh was two months pregnant.

Her father would have beaten the shit out of her — probably even kill her. Sex out of wedlock? Forget that! Having sex, at all? Beverly could laugh thinking of his reaction to her situation, she could. But she didn't. Because carrying a baby of an unknown father wasn't funny, at all.

She was heartbroken and alone.

Except she wasn't, Beverly had her baby. Her love, her life. And for the following twenty years, she would try to convince herself that it was fine.

Except it wasn't.

Well, at least she had motherhood and a hotel to fix to distract her.

October 2000

Queens, New York

Eddie Kaspbrak loved his son more than he loved himself.

So that's why when he realized he had been repressing his homosexuality for thirteen years after being raised in a hill-billy, ignorant filled homophobic shitty of a small town – he began hating himself down to his bones.

He was married to a woman, he had a stable job and a cute five-year-old son that took after him. Every dad dreams of that, right? Right. Except when he told Myra, his controlling and health-obsessed wife, that he was gay—and even though they haven't touched each other sexually ever since Nick was born—she was shocked, disgusted and promptly kicked him out with the promise of 'I'll call my lawyer Edward Kaspbrak, and soon you'll be living in the gutter!'.

Which he doubted since he still had that stable job with a good income that he deeply despised.

What the fuck was a risk analyst anyways? He wanted to be a limo

driver.

Myra was direct with their divorce, but what shocked Eddie the most was her tossing Nick aside like he had some sort of contagious disease.

“I’m not raising a faggot’s son under my ceiling!” Myra’s screaming even made her lawyer flinch, but Eddie seemed to have expected this.

So Eddie promptly left with Nick, he put his belongings in a storage room and stayed at a hotel, in a nice room where Nick could have a great view of the city—his son loved views, and the higher the better — and where it was close to his job place. The hotel had a good daycare and the room service was fantastic, but Eddie couldn’t feed cheeseburgers and pizza to his son every day. He felt guilty about not being able to cook a meal. His mother and ex-wife never allowed him to touch a stove or an oven, afraid he’d get hurt or that the gas fumes would intoxicate him.

It took Eddie to realize that perhaps, he married Myra because she acted and disturbingly looked like his deceased mother.

He understood that he couldn’t raise Nick in a hotel forever, but he also didn’t want to stay in the city. Eddie wanted to start anew. He needed to get away from New York to somewhere Nick could grow up happy and away from his toxic mother.

Then, two months after living in a hotel and being already recognized at the entrance by the receptionists, Eddie Kaspbrak remembered his friend.

Beverly Marsh.

They haven’t talked to each other in eight years. When he moved out of Derry to go to college, Beverly stayed behind because she still had high school to finish. He always felt guilty for not returning to see how she was. Being two years younger, Beverly had been like a little sister to him ever since he was twelve years old.

He reminisced over their friendship when he remembered he still had a photo album full of photos of his childhood. His mom was unaware

of its existence, of course, it was his and Beverly's album. His mother hated Beverly because the redhead had a whorish reputation across the town.

It was funny the way he couldn't stop smiling as his dark, brown eyes stared at the pictures.

Their last summer together had been amazing, it was when Beverly kissed him on the lips in a platonic way and promised that they would always be friends in her heart. And Eddie had agreed.

Finding Beverly Marsh had been complicated. But Eddie wasn't surprised when he found out that she was on a small island somewhere in Greece for the past five years. That's Beverly for you, and he was thrilled to hear her voice again.

When he called her at nine after the sun had set, it was four in the morning in the hotel that she was apparently operating in Kalokairi. Eddie felt completely stupid for not thinking about the timezone differences.

But even her sleepy, groggy voice didn't hide her pleasingly surprised tone when she realized Eddie was on the phone.

"Eddie fucking Kaspbrak?! I remember you, Eddie!! My favorite asthmatic!"

Eddie never stopped grinning the whole conversation.

"I'm so sorry this happened to you, Eddie. You can't win with that kind of people, why do you think we left Derry as soon as we could?"

He almost sobbed at her gentle, caring tone. He'd miss her so much, but how come he hadn't tried contacting her sooner?

As Eddie rambled about his shitty life, finally feeling the lump stuck on his throat diminishing as Beverly, a person he hasn't seen in almost a decade, listened attentively, he decided to stop being a selfish dick and ask her how she was doing.

That's when Eddie found out that Beverly had a four-year-old daughter. And her name was Ava.

One hour into their mindless chatting of just catching up and Eddie making sure she didn't want to go back to sleep – Beverly fiercely told Eddie for him to get Nick, pack his shit, quit his boring job (he resented that) and come work with her, at her hotel.

Eddie found himself easily accepting her offer. Which was insane. It was crazy. Completely irresponsible.

Eddie quit his job the day afterward, called Beverly he'd be there in a week, and after five days of planning how to reach the island of Kalokairi Eddie boarded the plane to Athens from LaGuardia Airport, leaving his old life behind. Nick slept through most of the nine hours of the flight and Eddie realized that his little boy was, in reality, excited about going away.

Eddie really loved his son more than himself.

Late October 2000

When they reached Athens, Eddie took Nick to a hotel for the night to rest and clear his mind for tomorrow. Then, an hour after dawn, the two Kaspbraks caught a flight to Skiathos where they barely managed to catch the ferry that, finally, took them to Kalokairi.

Nick was ecstatic the whole time, he had always being surrounded by a concrete jungle. Not even Eddie could hide his awe at the clear, blue water as he tried to keep his son from falling over the edge of the crowded ferry.

Reality hit Eddie. He was going to reunite and live with a woman he hasn't seen in eight years. Wasn't that strange? Probably. Did he care? Not really. He'd been talking with Beverly over her hotel's phone almost every day, and she still sounded like the adventurous sixteen-year-old he left behind for college.

Eddie Kaspbrak took a chance, and he would never regret it even after sixteen years of managing housekeeping, watching his son fall in love with Beverly's daughter and, a day before their wedding, meeting Richie Tozier.

July 2016

Nightfall was upon the Greek island of Kalokairi as a young girl, that had slipped away under the watchful eyes of her mom and future father-in-law, padded through the calm, blue ocean water towards the mainland with a rowing boat.

Her red, auburn hair was long and wavy, she had freckles over her button nose, and her blue, bright eyes stared ahead of her, filled with determination as she rowed by herself.

Singing always seemed to calm her down.

I have a dream

A song to sing

To help me cope

With anything

Ava Marsh was getting married in a month. The invitations had been sent to friends of her mother or her own friends, but there were three people that more in the world she wanted to see at her wedding – and one of them could be her father.

When the girl arrived at the mainland, she made her way towards a small mailbox where the envelopes would be retrieved and sent in the early dawn of the day, settled on sending the three, pink envelopes to their addresses.

If you see the wonder

Of a fairytale

You can take the future

The young soon-to-be-bride hesitated before sliding the first envelope through the mail's gap. What if they ignore it? What if they don't even wanna see her mom again? After all, she was beckoning them to come by using her mom's name, not hers.

They don't even know she exists.

"...Even if you fail," Ava sighed, not singing anymore.

She stood in front of the yellow mailbox, under the light of the moon. Biting her lip, she looked down at the letters in her hands with a nervous, but emotional smile.

"Ben Hanscom," she began while reading the addresses written on the front of the letter and throwing them inside the slit, "Bill Denbrough," another letter gone out of her hands, "...Richie Tozier."

There was a hopeful gleam in her eyes as she put the last letter inside the bin, there was no going back after this.

August 2016

33 hours until the wedding

9 AM

Ava hasn't seen her friends in a year.

Lisa and Ali had both gone off to college together in America – but obviously, they were coming to her wedding, as her bridesmaids. When they arrived by the docks, Ava couldn't contain herself as she sprinted down the island, from her mom's hotel, to where their boat would be docking soon.

Joyful shrieking startled some fishermen nearby when the boat was tied to the dock – she instantly began running through the wooden path towards the docking zone as her two best friends, who instantly met her halfway, began screaming as well.

The three formed a group hug surrounded by laughter and excitement as Lisa lifted Ava from the ground to spin her in the air and then stepped back with a grin to watch Ali glomp the redhead as well.

The three girls then stepped away from each other with knowing grins on their faces and started performing their group chant

vigorously.

"Weee're... Ava, Ali, Lisa – we're the greatest bestest mates!"

Ali flexed her arms together, "I'm tough!"

Lisa raised an arm over her head, "I'm tall!"

Ava grinned as she cupped her chin cutely, "I'm tiny!"

"And we're gonna rock this place! Whoo!!" they cheered, whooping with joy as the high fived each other.

They laughed it off together, feeling blessed to be in each other's presence after so long, and Ali suddenly grabbed Ava's arm to stare eyes widened at her wedding ring.

"Ava!!" she exclaimed, impressed at the size of the diamond. And Lisa grabbed hold of her hand, bringing it closer to inspect it as well.

Ava looked away with an embarrassed grin, "Oh God..." she giggled.

"It's a rock!! Look at this thing?!" Ali continued in awe.

"I want one!" Lisa whined.

"I'm gonna get married tomorrow!!" Ava beamed to her friends, even though they already knew, in a jubilant manner, "I'm so glad you guys are here because I have a secret!! And I can't tell anyone," she admitted with sheepishly as the three began making their way out of the dock.

"Avie?!!" Ali exclaimed, instantly placing her hand on the redhead's belly with a shocked expression, "You're knocked up?!"

"No!" the redhead snorted, shoving their hands away. This island already had enough rumors to go around and Ava definitely didn't want a rumor about her being pregnant to get to her mom.

"Your mom would kill you," Lisa nodded, patting the shorter girl's head and disappointed in the lack of scandal.

“Her mom? What about Eddie?! He’d kill Nick!” Ali laughed.

“Double homicide!” both cried together, smirking teasingly at the bride-to-be.

Ava scoffed, rolling her eyes, “Please, my mom had me when she was twenty-one – I’d be fine. But that’s not my secret,” they continued walking as Ava stood in the middle, her arms wrapped around each of her friend’s waist, she giggled to herself, keeping her friends in anticipation as they stopped at the bottom of a hill on the island and enjoying the expectant looks they were giving her, “I invited my dad,” she finally stated.

Ali and Lisa stared at her with shocked expressions.

“You are joking!” the taller one hollered.

Ali joined her side, both standing in front of her.

“You found him?!” Ali asked promptly.

“No, no, no!” Ava interrupted, “Not exactly,” then she grabbed their hands and took them up the island, towards the path between the woods.

When alone, she pushed the two young women forward, getting them to sit on a large rock so she could explain the situation fully. Ava felt good to finally have someone to share this information that she has been keeping around for this past month. As much as Ava loved her mom, this was one secret she was intent on keeping from her until the day of the wedding.

Until tomorrow, to be exact. Ali and Lisa waited impatiently as Ava collected her words. Where to even begin with a story like this?

“Okay...you know what my mom always said when I asked about my father – it was a summer romance, and he’d gone long before she realized that she was expecting me. And I’d always kind of accepted that that’s all I’d ever know,” she began as they nodded understandably. Ava then reached for something inside her bag, “Well, I was ransacking some old trunks...and I found this.”

Ava showed them a red journal, littered with stickers that looked like it had belonged to a rebellious teenager. Lisa whistled.

“Damn, what a raging journal.”

“It’s the diary she kept in the year she was pregnant with me,” Ava explained as Ali opened her mouth with shock.

“Ava!!” Ali mildly scolded, but she sat near the redhead, always ready for some scandal to happen.

The two girls could only stare in wonder as Ava opened the diary to read from an opened page.

“July, seventeenth – what a night!” Ava read as if she had already gone through the whole book, but she couldn’t help to grin widely at the expressions her friends were making.

“I don’t know if I want to hear this...” Lisa said with a small, but still uncomfortable expression. She loved Beverly so reading her private diary didn’t feel respectful at all.

“I do!!” Ali remarked eagerly as she scooted closer to Ava, eyeing the page hungrily.

“Ben rowed me over to the little island—that’s here, Kalokairi—we danced on the beach, and we kissed on the beach, and... dot dot dot,” she grinned at their confusion.

“What?” Lisa asked dumbly.

“Dot dot dot! That’s what they did in the olden days!” Ava told her with an obvious tone.

When her friends got the hint, they began giggling in shock and giddiness.

“Ben’s the one! I *know* he is! I’ve never felt like this before...” Ava continued reading, feeling the need to sing the lyrics that her mom wrote in the diary years ago, “*Honey honey, how he thrills me, aha, honey honey!*”

Her friends watched at Ava stood from the rock to continue her reading in front of them, with the blue ocean as the background as the redhead sang with a bubbly tone.

“Honey honey, nearly kill me, aha, honey honey,” She gave them a giddy look, making Ali and Lisa laugh, *“I’ve heard about him before I wanted to know some more. And now I know what they mean, he’s a love machine! Oh, he makes me dizzy!”*

Both girls jumped up and followed after Ava as she took off running, singing the lyrics in a bubbly tune as her friends followed excitedly, starved for more content.

“Honey honey, let me feel it, aha, honey honey. Honey honey, don’t conceal it, aha, honey honey. The way that you kiss me goodnight,” Ava continued as she leaned against a tree.

“The way that you kiss me goodnight!” Lisa and Ali sang at the same time.

“The way that you hold me tight.”

“The way that you hold me tight,” the two girls repeated as they circled Ava, beaming at her.

“I feel like I wanna sing when you do your...”

“THING!” The three girls squealed, reading from Ava’s shoulders.

Out of breath from running up the island, they sat down on another rock, waiting for Ava to continue with the pages once more.

“So this guy Ben is your father?” Ali asked her with a clarification tone, amazed that Ava had discovered the mystery man after so many years of growing up without a paternal figure – well, except for Eddie Kaspbrak, who moved to the island when Ava was four years old after leaving his wife with his son.

“The plot thickens,” Ava replied as she continued reading from the diary’s pages. She paused before ending the sad tale of Ben Hanscom, “All this time, Ben’s been telling me he loves me, and now he’s announced that he’s engaged, so he’s going home to get married, and

I'm never going to see him again."

"Poor Beverly," the brunette commented as she frowned sadly.

"August fourth – *what* a night," Ava had a grin back on her face as she read, "Richie, or as I call him, Trashmouth, rented a motorboat and I took him over to the little island."

"Richie?!" Lisa exclaimed.

The bride took off once again, her friends struggling to catch up with both her energetic pace and the scandalous plot twist.

"Ava wait!!" Ali called as she ran after her, "Hang on!"

"Though I'm still obsessed with Ben," Ava continued to read as the three walked up the stone steps that led to her mom's hotel, "Richie's so wild and such a funny guy! One thing led to another and... *dot dot dot!!*"

Lisa and Ali laughed at the incredulous passage of the diary.

"Well, shit!!" Lisa chortled, impressed at Beverly's way to move on from that bastard Ben.

They made it up to the hotel now, Lisa and Ali got closer as they waited for more juicy information on Beverly's past life.

"August eleventh—*Bill* turned up out of the blue, so I said I'd show him the island," Ava giggled in amusement as Lisa gasped again, "He's so sweet and understanding, one thing led to another, and..."

"DOT DOT DOT!" The three girls all exclaimed before laughing.

"Oh my God!!" Ali uttered in complete disbelief.

But before they could ask Ava more questions about the diary, a familiar voice interrupted their group reading session.

"Here come the bridesmaids!" a female voice sang.

Ava quickly hid the diary behind her back as none other than Beverly

Marsh herself emerged from the hotel's entrance. Her red hair had only a few more grey hairs sprouting, but her slender, seductive frame hadn't changed a bit, the skin by her smiling eyes—the same ones Ava had— was only a bit wrinkled, probably on account of Ava and Nick's shenanigans. There was a flower dangling in the red locks of her bangs, matching the shirt she had on under her worn dungarees. She was carrying a broom in her hand, which Beverly placed aside to receive the hugs of her daughter's best friends.

"Beverly!" Lisa and Ali greeted her happily while walking up to her to each hug the woman.

A grin etched across her lips as she met them halfway, hugging Lisa lovingly, "Wow...look at you!" the forty-year-old cooed as she then kissed Ali's cheek, "Ugh!! Stop growing already!" the mother emotionally exclaimed with wet eyes as the two young women laughed softly, "You sound like you're having fun already!"

"Oh, we are," Ali told her as Ava gave her a warning look.

Beverly chuckled, "Oh... I used to have fun," she told them, with a reminiscing look in her eyes. She snapped her fingers and turned around, grabbing her broom again to return to her work.

"Oh, we *know*."

Lisa bumped her shoulder on Ali's arm as Ava tried not to laugh behind their backs as Beverly gave her a confused expression at her statement. Thankfully, she didn't comment about it, walking away from the bridesmaids with a shrug.

Kids will be kids, Beverly thought.

Honey honey, touch me baby, aha, honey honey

Honey honey, hold me baby, aha, honey honey

You look like a movie star (You look like a movie star)

But I like just who you are (I like just who you are)

And, honey, to say the least... you're a doggone—beast!!!!

The girls hurried into Ava's room, and the redhead couldn't stop beaming as her friends closed the door behind her.

"So, who is your dad?" Lisa asked, hoping that from all the three men from Beverly's past, Ava at least knew which one could be, "Ben, Richie or Bill?"

"I don't know!!"

"But which one did you invite?" Ali wondered.

Ava didn't answer, but when her expression became sheepish as she picked at the pages of the diary, it was all they needed to know. Their mouths dropped open in utter disbelief and shock as they took a step back with every word, landing and sitting on the wooden bench in front of the wall.

"Oh. My. God."

Ava's charming smile reappeared at their stunned reaction. She bit her lip and squealed internally while beaming at her friends.

"Do they know?" Ali dared to ask, and Lisa gave her an 'obviously not' look.

"Well, what would you write to a total stranger? 'Please come to my wedding you might be my father?'" Ava sputtered out, "No... they think that mom sent the invites, and with what's in here," she waved the pink diary, "no surprise, they said YES!" she shrieked eagerly.

Ali and Lisa looked at each other, widely grinning, before joining Ava's enthusiasm about her plan as the three sang together while wilding around the room.

Honey honey, how you thrill me, aha, honey honey

Honey, honey, nearly kill me, aha, honey, honey

Ava, however, placed her mom's diary from twenty years ago on top of her bed and walked towards her balcony, leaving Lisa and Ali to dance by themselves.

“I’d heard about you before... I wanted to know some more... And now I’m about to see... What you mean to me...” she softly sang, calmly, as she gazed towards the ocean with a hopeful look.

2. The Fathers Cometh

Summary for the Chapter:

the boys travel

local bird-man loves his wife

englishwoman is tired and in need of scotch

disaster gay loves his son

rebellious daughter catfishes her three dads

Notes for the Chapter:

holy fuck,,,

like, guys, I wasn't expecting this attention?? Ya'll made me write more right away!! This is also a slightly longer chapter because I love you guys.

12 hours earlier

Far away in Omaha, Nebraska, a forty-year-old architect hurried away from his modern house, hoping to catch his flight on time after enduring an emergency video meeting that delayed him for two *goddamn* hours. It was to take off at exactly nine in the morning, and Ben Hanscom, executive and CEO of Hanscom & Associates—a high-standard architect company—was already running late.

The meeting with choosy hotel managers had gone well, but Ben had no intention of disappointing Beverly more than he already had twenty years ago. He was not going to be late. Absolutely fucking not.

"I'm going to be late," Ben hissed under his breath as he got out of his taxi cab when he reached its destination.

He untied his tie as he hurried through the airport, scrambling to grab his passport and other identification while juggling his baggage.

The airplane gate for his flight was empty, and Ben didn't hesitate to run towards the flight attendant, who welcomed him warmly and with a flirtatious tone that Ben was accustomed to overlooking.

Ben was already holding his ticket out with a stiff arm, his stress getting the better of him. "Have a good flight," The blonde flight bid him with a sultry tone.

"Yeah," Ben sighed as the attendant took his ticket, "You too." "Go right through that hallway and step onto the plane, please!" Ben paced quickly, using his jogging skills, pushing himself to walk even faster, as if that would make time go quicker. He didn't ignore the reason for his attitude but pushed it aside until he was completely settled on the plane and on his way towards Athens.

Ben only relaxed when he sat down on his first-class seat.

"Thank you for choosing Eppley Airfield today! We will be flying..."

The voice overhead became distant to Ben.

His thoughts were settled, now, focusing on the main point of this journey. He couldn't call it an adventure yet, although that basically described the opposite of his entire life. But, hopefully, when he reached Kalokairi something would change.

Maybe the spark of adventure would still be lingering in the island air—Ben hoped so. A majority of his young life was spent in an office, and later, a divorce court. Thankfully for him, Hannah hadn't demanded anything from him but shared custody of their two sons, who were now old enough to be on their own.

He tried making them daring and energetic, but obviously, Hannah didn't take to that lifestyle. He had lunch with them every Sunday and talked with them over the phone almost every day.

Which brought Ben back to the biggest problem. Beverly Marsh. Ben has always been lonely. From when he was a fat kid and an easy target for bullying to one of the most successful architects in the country. Even when he lost the weight and became a wanted bachelor, Ben was still alone. Inside the modern and expensive house

that he himself built, having conference meetings through video calls instead of being in the same room as his associates. He wasn't a bitter man, those who were close to him described him as a very friendly person with an easy smile on his lips and a warm heart. People wondered why Ben Hansom, a forty-year-old handsome (divorced) man, was still single. No one knew the answer, it seems to be baffling. But no one truly knew about the real Ben. The Ben that fell in love twenty years ago for an amazing, adventurous and charming woman in a small island in Greece and that never stopped loving her to this day.

He still keeps the photo of her twenty-year-old self in his wallet, along with the cute song lyrics she wrote to him. Without knowing it, Beverly was the cause for his divorce—if she hadn't been so wonderful and admirable, Ben would have never fallen in love with her while he was still engaged.

And being so wonderful and alluring was Beverly's fault, though Ben blamed her for nothing. If he had never stumbled upon that beach, Beverly would have never gotten her heart broken momentarily, and Ben would still be married. But...

Obviously, that wasn't what Ben wanted.

Beverly was perfect. She was spontaneous, adventurous, beautiful and daring, all a combination Ben didn't know he needed in his dull life. They kissed on the beach after a day of knowing each other, but their connection was real, unlike seen in the movies—those who roam together with no fear have intertwined souls.

Ben still remembered every little detail about that day, the loose white t-shirt Beverly wore, the cut-off jeans that hardly went past her long shins, those flowery converse sneakers, the huge sun hat she tossed into the wind.

That is why he was returning to Greece. Back to Beverly Marsh, the only woman that has made him feel wanted and cherished, even when they only have known each other for three days until she found out that he was engaged and told him to leave and never return.

The main question was: why was Ben doing this? Why was he on his

way? Why was he worried about missing his flight, being late for the ferry? Why was he frightened and overjoyed about heading back to the small island of Kalokairi? Why had he been in tears when he read that Beverly had a daughter? Why had he immediately jumped on the chance to see Beverly again, even though the latter never wanted to see him again? He was honestly anxious about going and possibly seeing another man with his arms wrapped around Beverly, lovingly looking at her as he luckily got to call her his wife. But if Beverly invited him, that means that perhaps, he had a chance. And he hoped she would take it on him.

Bill Denbrough traveled from London and he thought that he was getting too old for this shit. Not only his cab driver didn't understand English and didn't speed up enough—but he was possibly about to miss the ferry to Kalokairi.

He hasn't seen Beverly Marsh in twenty years, but he still remembers her beautiful auburn hair, her cheeky, mischievous smile and her blue eyes piercing into his soul.

Receiving a wedding invitation from her had been a surprise, he thought she had forgotten about him and their memories of Paris and the small-time they spent on that island.

But apparently, he wasn't as uninteresting as his ex-girlfriend lovingly inputted before promptly breaking up with him.

Bill thought he was quite boring for a horror novel writer, and even though he was successful, people never seem to like his book endings—and that was probably because he never liked the way things ended with Beverly.

Was he punishing himself for not trying harder? He met her in Paris, then followed her to Greece and lost his virginity to her on that nirvana of an island. But then he left and moved to London to start his career.

He was happy to hear from her though—even though he didn't actually talk with her—he never forgot Beverly. His feelings for her were no longer as amorous as they were twenty years ago but that

didn't mean he forgot her.

Bill was a handsome man, he had gone through many relationships that lasted years but he never found that spark that he desired. To him, British women were picky and sometimes ruthless, but maybe he was the one choosy about his partners. Bill never really tried to understand why his past relationships failed, he just settled splitting the blame and move on.

He had a book to work on, anyways.

And perhaps Kalokairi could give him some inspiration.

Back to the day before the wedding

With a frown, the architect jogged through Athens International Airport, emerging outside onto a line of taxis parked by the curb. He hopped inside the first one and through broken Greek, that he picked on when he lived for six months in Kalokairi twenty years ago, he told the driver to hurriedly drive towards the docks of Skiathos.

Unbeknown to Ben, Bill was also trying to reach the same destination. And coincidentally, they began unintentionally racing towards it. But they were too late. Even when Ben's loud whistle and Bill's loud shouting was heard from the ferry, all they receiving was the passengers inside waving at them as the boat departed towards Kalokairi without them.

"Wait!! Come back!!" Ben begged.

"Stop!" Bill called out, trying to catch his breath. The passengers on the boat waved at them happily, thinking they were just cheering them on for some stupid reason.

"F-Fuck!" Bill cursed under his breath, gulping down on his dry throat when he realized his childhood stuttering made a quick and brief come back.

"My sentiments exactly," Ben's heart sunk in his chest. Frantically, he turned to the ferry listing and cursed under his breath when he read the schedule.

Bill looked on the other side, wide and confused eyes scanning the sign. His frown only deepened when he didn't understand what he was reading, "I'm trying to get to Kalokairi. When's the next ferry?"

"Δευτέρα," Ben answered, eyes squinting when the glaring of the sun flashed on his eyes as he watched the ferry become smaller.

"What?"

"Monday."

"Fuck!!" Bill yelled, without the stutter this time.

"Yeah, my sentiments exactly," Ben nodded, repeating himself as he strangely looked to calm as opposed to the storm brewing inside his head.

The writer and the architect straightened up in frustration, trying to figure out what to do now.

Ben pulled out his invitation and began reading it quickly, only coming to the sad conclusion that if he caught the Monday boat, the wedding would have already been over.

Bill's face flashed with recognition at the style of the letter and decided to talk, "Bride or groom?" he inquired.

"... bride," Ben was stunned at the coincidence, "Although, I've actually never met her," he added as a friendly smile formed on his lips. So this man was also in the same situation as he was? That made Ben feel slightly better about the circumstances.

"Ahoy there!" Ben and Bill didn't realize where the voice came from until they looked up to see a barefooted, tan-skinned and with long, dark, curly hair man smiling down at them with a grin. He looked comfortable hanging on a beam of a lone sailboat like it was his bird perch—and the man was glancing at the pair with amusement and curiosity.

Richie Tozier thought this couldn't get any funnier.

Just a month ago, he was waking up in his Beverly Hill's bigass house

at one in the afternoon, getting his mail from outside and just lazing around on his day off, checking his mail one by one like a responsible adult he wasn't when he received a very interesting letter.

A fucking beacon in the name of Beverly Marsh.

Holy shit was Richie ready for this wedding. He had left the U.S two weeks ago, renting a sailboat and remembering how to control it again—he hasn't done this in twenty years—and the man had been giddy the whole flight towards Greece.

He couldn't wait for this wedding, Richie was thrilled to see Beverly again and meet her daughter – fuck, Beverly 'Molly Ringwald' Marsh was a fucking mother!! That shit was hilarious to him. Beverly was one of those people who you could never forget. That summer of '95 was forever one of his best ones thanks to that woman.

And this was before he truly accepted his bisexuality.

She was wild like him, never got offended with his jokes and boy did Richie loved a person with fire in their eyes and soul. Even though when they met – when he gave her a ride to Kalokairi on his sailor boat – Richie's attempts to seduce Beverly failed as she saw right through his womanizing ruse, the two still had fun together and thanks to his perseverance, he did end up sleeping with her.

But back then, there was more than just sex between the two. Even though they both knew he was going to leave, Richie never forgot a woman like her. And he was so happy that she didn't forget him either. But sadly, he hasn't changed at all. Richie always left when he was beginning to grow feelings, it was like he was scared of taking that step forward. Now, he just wanted to see it with his own eye-contacts. See Beverly and meet her daughter. God, he was going to be Ava's crazy fucking uncle if everything goes well. He always wanted a kid but at the age of forty and with his tendencies of backing away when things got too serious, he imagined that it was probably too late to think about fatherhood.

But that was another emotional side of Richie that he never showed.

He was now more interested in these two handsome men that—and

maybe the universe was bringing them together for an awesome threesome—had the same wedding invitation Richie did.

His mom raised him to be a gentleman, so he decided to give them an offer, “You guys need a ride to Kalokairi?” he asked with an approachable grin. It was one of ‘please don’t think I’m a serial killer I’m just trying to be nice.’ grin.

Richie had a warm feeling that this could be the beginning of a bromance.

Just guys being dudes. Nothing more.

As it turns out, the stranger Ben and the one named Bill met had a boat of his own. Bill whispered that he was the famed stand-up comedian Richie Tozier, but also a “part-time adventurer” who had been practically everywhere.

What a fucking weird life to have, Ben thought as he envied him at the same time.

It could only be fate that allowed Ben an ounce of mercy, and the three set out with Richie, free of charge, and headed to the Greek island a few hours away.

They introduced themselves loosely, but Ben felt that it was painfully clear who they were all looking forward to seeing—Beverly brought out a certain expression on the faces of men, and since Ben had seen his reflection in the clear ocean water, he recognized the same look on both Bill’s and Richie’s faces.

This trip, however, beat any tourist boat the two would have been forced to sit on—and for his own entertainment, Richie asked the men to help steer the sailboat, which was equipped with a Greek flag on the lead pole. He too was heading to Kalokairi for a wedding.

“More open!” Richie called, containing his laugh as Ben hopped up to grab hold of a rope, “I’m on it! I’m on it!” the broader man exclaimed, not used managing knots.

“That’s good!” Richie complimented, “That’s it!”

Bill plopped down tiredly, rolling the sleeves of his white shirt up as the two men sat down together, allowing the wind to guide them across the sea. Bill watched Richie coolly fling himself off a beam, landing right in front of the other two and leaning back casually.

“I know who you are,” the writer said, his eyes the slightest bit interested, “You’re Richie Tozier, aren’t you?”

“Yes, I am,” Richie smiled mildly, “I’m famous or something, aren’t I?” he quipped lightly.

“Your shows are a godsend on dull business trips,” Bill inputted with a compliment, “I may look like I’m pondering my securities, but in reality, I’m trekking across some remote corner of the planet.”

Ben raised an eyebrow at the statement.

“You should try it for real sometime,” The dark-haired man suggested. Why did he have to be taller than Bill as well? It was time to change the subject.

“No, certainly, I’ll never be the spontaneous adventurer,” Bill stated with a distant look in his eyes.

“Could be good for your books,” Ben interjected, nodding at Bill.

“Oh. You know who I am?” the blue-eyed man chuckled.

Richie’s eyes widened comically as he suddenly snapped his fingers, “I fucking knew I recognized your name from somewhere! You wrote those horror books with shitty endings! Man, and then they got turned into movies and–”

Bill squinted his eyes at the man. If only there was a word that could shut his mouth instantly. But his offended expression seemed to have been enough for Richie to silence himself, all they did was share a look before the curly-haired man snorted loudly.

Ben, however, sympathized with Bill and patted his shoulder, “Don’t listen to him, the endings weren’t *that* bad.”

Bill, surprisingly, wasn’t comforted. He grumpily glared at the clear

water and Ben decided to let him be with his thoughts.

He had his own to go through as he glanced towards Richie.

Why did he just happen to be heading to Kalokairi as well? He mentioned that he knew the owner of the motel there, which Ben did know was none other than Beverly Marsh herself, via the wedding invite. But how did he know Beverly, and why was Ben so jealous again?

Beverly. Beverly. Beverly.

Beverly sneezed and Eddie glared at her.

"I swear to fucking God, Bev, how many times do I have to tell you to sneeze into your fucking arm?!" He scolded her as his dark eyebrows almost touched from how deep his scowl was.

She laughed his apprehension off, used to him being this way, "It was a dust sneeze, Eddie, take it easy."

"You still spit your shit everywhere! I don't wanna be sick at my son's wedding!" he huffed, placing a box full of china plates on the kitchen counter of the main house, "By the way, did you find the list of the total amount of guests or do we just randomly put plates on the tables and pray that is enough for everyone?"

Beverly grinned, "That sounds like fun, let's do that!"

"Very funny, give me the list," he dryly said as he opened his hand.

She exhaled through her nose and rolled her eyes goodnaturedly, "Well someone woke up on the wrong side of the bed," she commented while fetching the wrinkled paper that contained the guest names into his palm, "Maybe we need to find you a man and get you laid, Kaspbrak."

Eddie's cheeks darkened, "Shut the fuck up! What is Nick hears you?!"

Beverly blinked confusedly at him, "Uh, Eddie sweetie, you do know

that Nick is aware of you being gay, right?”

He let out a frustrated noise, “I know but—I don’t wanna make things weird! I mean...” he looked around, afraid someone might be listening, “I do... carve the attention—but it’s complicated right now. Nick is getting married so young and the last thing he needs is seeing his dad dating someone after fifteen years of seeing me single!”

Beverly scoffed, “You’ve been single, but you had fun. Didn’t you? And Nick never found out? Did he?” she bumped shoulders into him while wiggling her eyebrows, “There’s a lot of newcomers coming to this island, find a man to show around the island and, ya know...” she bit her lips, “...dot, dot, dot,” she hinted while wiggling her eyebrows at each word.

Eddie rolled his eyes, but he smiled at the hint she was throwing, “Oh yeah? You wanna talk about sex? Ms. I haven’t gotten laid ever since I’ve given birth?”

“Touché,” Beverly grinned.

On the touristic ferry that Ben and Bill missed walked two youthful spirited creatures who happened to be the best friends and bandmates of the legendary Beverly Marsh and the fiancéé of one of them.

In their time away from Kalokairi, they had forgotten how snug traveling to the island was and struggled to find a good place to sit for a few minutes as the boat ride continued.

Patricia Blum—mostly addressed as Patty—acted as the calmer of the two, not in energy, but in the category of maintenance. As the best-selling author of various cookbooks, Patty put herself in charge of finding a good spot where she, her future husband and one of her best friends could see both the sea and the fascinating people surrounding them. Her wavy bob-cut, dirty blonde hair made her easily noticeable within the dreary islanders along for the trip, but she paid her celebrity status no mind and nudged through every knee and elbow they passed – always holding her fiancéé’s hand as her friend humorously struggled to walk behind them.

Husband to be, Stanley Uris, eyed his surroundings with awe. He was a tall, lanky man with some muscle on his arms that Patty loved to squeeze during their love-making and he had curly, dark brown hair with a pair of brown eyes to match. Patty loved his fastidious mannerisms and matureness. It was a breeze of fresh air from all the sleazy guys she had to dump during her early twenty's. He had an extremely successful job as an accountant in Atlanta and Patty was very proud of their large house. But it wasn't the money and success she fell in love with — it was his the perspective he had about life and how loved he made her feel.

She also adored his cute bird-watching hobby and the way he always managed to go everywhere with formal clothing and get away with it.

Patty was bringing Stan as her plus one to the wedding, but she also wanted Beverly to finally meet him.

“Patty look at these islands, I might be able to see a Sardinian warbler around here,” he commented jubilantly.

“Sardinian what-?!” a woman exclaimed with a British accent.

Patty smirked before leaning in further, “Excuse me, coming through, she is a senior citizen! Thank you!” she announced, finding a small seat to be shared between her, Stan, and her companion, “My mother needs a perch.”

“Mother?” The other woman beside her groaned, squeezing between a Patty and another islander, “We're the same age!” “Yeah, well—parts of us are.” Patty joked, making Stan casually snort.

Audra Phillips silently sighed as she took her spot, disgusted at the dirtiness of the wood and décor on each nook and cranny of the boat. Audra was extremely high-maintenance, as proven by her designer clothing, expensive handbag and three other loads of luggage stacked somewhere below deck—she was slightly shorter than Patty, but none the less sassy and playful, having just landed her third ex-husband a while back.

Between the two, they could get into a lot of mischief, mostly

triggered by Patty's need for fun and dancing every Friday night, but these days and nights spent together weren't the same without their third musketeer, Beverly Marsh. And besides, now that Patty was getting married, Stan often came along with them on their escapades and Audra was honestly thinking she was becoming their third wheel.

Not that she didn't like Stan, he was a good man with a fantastic sense of humor. She was genuinely happy for both of them.

When the beautiful city-goers were settled, an old man across from their seats offered a green bottle of wine towards her. "No, thank you," Audra declined politely. She already had a few drinks before they boarded the ferry just so she would be able to make this awful trip across the ocean.

When the man offered it to Patty and Stan—who had placed an arm around his fiancée to bring her closer to him—the blonde grinned and reached for it.

"Oh! ευχαριστώ!" Patty thanked him as she accepted it, popping open the bottle's cork with her teeth and taking a big swig.

Audra rolled her eyes at the act but Stan grinned, lovingly staring at the way she swung that Greek wine down her throat.

"Bloody animal," the redhead laughed under her breath.

Rebelliously, Patty guzzled faster, not noticing the old man happily taking out a special book from his bag and holding it in their direction with an excited expression on his face.

Stan recognized the book and pointed the detail out to his drinking bride, "Oh look dove, he has your cookbook."

"Isn't that brilliant?" Audra grinned, bumping shoulders with her friend.

"Oh," Patty sheepishly chuckled as she handed the bottle to Stan.

The old man held the book out to Patty with a twinkle in his eyes, "Stavros!" he said, pointing to himself as he wrote his name in the air. Though he didn't know English, it seems that the three

understood that he wanted Patty to sign it.

Audra produced a pen out of her expensive purse and handed it to Patty.

“Stavros,” Patty repeated while nodding, signing her name along with a little note inside the book’s front panel. She passed the book back to the happy man, who nodded in thanks and giddily rested her head on Stan’s shoulders, in return, he kissed her head.

“I’m so proud of you,” he whispered in her ear. Stan knew this cookbook meant a lot for Patty, she had been so passionate about it and very nervous when it finally released. He had bought it—even though Patty insisted he didn’t need to because she had offered him a copy—and read it and thoroughly enjoy it. And Stan considered himself a lucky man to end up falling in love with a woman capable of cooking better than him.

Ignoring their romantic aura, Audra noticed the woman to her right had a baby hidden inside her carrying basket. Audra loved babies, and she still wanted to be a mom. So she motioned at her, asking if she could take a look at the cute little one, which the mother casually nodded, and as she pulled back the covering, Audra screamed bloody murder when he saw not a baby, but a dead fish, ugly fish with too many teeth.

Startled, both Stan and Patty looked into her direction.

“It’s just a fish!!” Patty comforted, rolling her eyes at the dramatics.

Stan couldn’t help it, he covered his mouth with his arm and snorted loudly, looking away as if Audra hadn’t noticed it.

With all the excitement going on, Ava still hadn’t forgotten that her friends needed to try on their bridesmaid dresses.

They whispered and chatted about the diary while hemming the waistlines of the Greek-style dresses. Ava incorporated some American traditions into the wedding, but since she had never been further past the mail drop off on the mainland anyway, she figured

no one would be offended if she didn't make it the main event of her and Nick's wedding.

Because of the whole possibility of Aphrodite's fountain rumored to be on this island, they were running with a casual Greek theme, only with an American bride and groom.

Lisa admired herself in the mirror as Ava finished pinning the dresses.

"You are so clever!" the blonde stated. "We're going to look fabulous tomorrow!" Ali agreed, grinning.

Ava laughed, resting her hands on the brunette's shoulders, dreamily wondering what she would look like in her wedding dress. "I want the perfect wedding," she commented with a happy sigh, "And I want my father to give me away!"

"Better be a wide aisle," Ali quipped.

Ava's mouth dropped before she yanked on her ponytail, making the girl yelp while Lisa laughed at her expense.

"I will know my father as soon as I see him," Ava told her confidently.

The door opened suddenly, and inside came Ava's husband-to-be, Nick Kaspbrak. Nick had been Ava's first friend, boyfriend, kiss and the two never stopped being attached from when he moved to the island with his father sixteen years ago. His dark, brown hair was usually messy and wide—as much as Eddie tried to keep it neat—and his matching brown eyes were always soulfully gentle towards Ava. From the moment they met, to kids playing around the island as if they were pirates treasure hunting to young adults with plans to travel around the world as their next adventure—Ava couldn't think of anyone else to fall in love with other than Nick.

"Nick" Lisa greeted him with a squeal as Ali let out a happy sound.

"Come here, gorgeous!" Nick greeted them warmly before promptly glomping the two girls into Ava's bed, "Put me down! I'm getting married tomorrow!" Nick laughed.

"Please be careful!" Ava warned with a smile on her face, not bothered that her fiancé was on top of two women, "There are pins in the dresses!"

Nick relented and stepped off the bed, standing back to watch the girls show off their new gowns.

"So?" Ava prompted, moving into a seductive pose, "What do you think?"

Lisa winked at him.

"Oh... yes!" Nick complimented as his voice cracked. "Oh yes?" Ava repeated dryly, "If you had your way it'd be a three-minute wedding in jeans and t-shirts, washed down with a bottle of beer."

Nick turned around to look at her with a feigned hurt expression, "You make me sound so unromantic," he then returned to Lisa and Ali, as if he needed to explain himself, "I just thought we should save our money for traveling."

"Well, we're not going anywhere yet!" although they were very close. There was a specific topic that ended up with the two arguing for minutes. Whilst Nick still wanted to see the world and save money for that, Ava still wanted to have a huge wedding to meet her father. And even though she felt a little selfish, she needed to find the part of her that was missing, "Anyway, please leave we're very, very busy," she stated while snapping her fingers at him. Nick snatched a hat and a fake cigar from the dresser and turned to give her a mischevious look, "I'm just getting some props for tonight," he told her before putting the cigar on his mouth and sizing her frame with a flirty smirk.

"Ooo!!" Lisa purred, "For his bachelor party~" Nick laughed, doing a little shoulder dance by the doorframe before exiting the hotel room, leaving Ali and Lisa to immediately turn their accusing gazes to Ava.

"Why haven't you told him you've invited your dads?" Ali asked worriedly. "Because he would say that I'd have to tell my mom," Ava argued as if it was obvious.

“Beverly’s absolutely gonna kill you when he finds out!” Lisa tried to reason.

“By the time she finds out, it’ll be too late,” Ava chuckled.

The girls kept quiet as the bride reflected on her latest drastic decision.

“I feel like there’s a part of me missing! And... when I meet my dad... everything will fall into place!” she emotionally told them, tears forming in the corner of her blue eyes.

Ali and Lisa couldn’t help but fondly look at their friend. The two pulled Ava into a tight hug as they decided to start being more supportive of this crazy situation.

“You sure you don’t wanna come with me to pick up the girls and Stan?” Beverly asked for the fifth time as she opened the door of her blue jeep outside by the hotel’s main entrance.

Eddie, who was seeing her off, shook his head and gestured back to the hotel, “Nah, I’d rather keep working and make sure everything is going according to plan.”

Beverly grinned knowingly as she sat down and placed her seatbelt, “You know Eddie, not everything goes according to plan. You have to expect the unexpected, blah, blah, blah.”

“Whatever, I need to see Nick anyways,” he grumbled as she turned on the engine and pulled her jeep from its parking space, “Drive safely!” he begged, anxious about the steep curves on this island’s roads.

“Sure thing, dad!” she called out before driving off, towards the road that would lead her to the nearest docks.

Eddie sighed, waving until the jeep disappeared. Jesus Christ, she could reckless sometimes so he desperately hoped Beverly would be fine. He decided to stop lingering and walk back to the hotel, facing the stairs that he once thought came straight from hell, but now was used to ascending. Eddie liked jogging around the island at dawns

and he has improved his physical health throughout the years without needing an actual gym. He had to pat himself on the back for making the abrupt decision to move here.

He never imagined himself being a Housekeeping Manager. But he found himself being a natural at it as he oversaw the entire housekeeping staff for the hotel, ensuring that the highest standards of cleanliness are met regularly and reliably. And his staff was keen enough to be sure they didn't mess up. Eddie wasn't mean to them, but sometimes he would scold if someone fucked up a room for endless hours.

Beverly once had to intervene when he didn't stop chewing on this poor girl, who was on the verge of crying. He later apologized to her, of course, and calmly explained what she did wrong.

He was thinking about re-checking on the guestlist again when he saw Nick passing by, wearing a funny hat and with a fake cigar (Eddie would've killed him if it was a real one) as he made his way across the patio.

"Nicky!!" Eddie called out.

His son stopped walking to roll his eyes at his father while taking the cigar out of his mouth, "Don't call me that!" he cheekily said before grinning widely, "What's up, dad?"

Eddie found himself easily relax around his boy. Even though they were the complete opposite, both Kaspbraks got along pretty well, even when Eddie could start being a tad overprotective.

He rested a hand on Nick's shoulder and eyed his hat with an amused look, "Getting ready for the bachelor party?" he guessed.

Nick beamed at him, "Hell yeah! And you're still invited, by the way!"

Eddie laughed, "Oh, yeah, that's what you want. Your old man partying with your friends."

Nick shrugged, looking at his dad with an unbothered look, "My boys like you dad, and I love having you around. It's *my* bachelor party so

I say that you are invited.”

Eddie felt a wave of affection going through his chest, he patted Nick’s shoulder and sighed, tiredly, “I love you too, buddy. But Bev and I are busy right now.”

“What about tonight?”

Eddie paused to think about it.

“Maybe.”

Little did Eddie know that he’d be bumping into someone who would be very special to him.

Villa Beverly was a hopping hotel already, but with the owner’s daughter’s wedding in one day and visitors arriving from every angle, each rock and corner was jumping with people, trying to ready everything in preparation.

Beverly herself was taking a brief (but much needed) break from the chaos, driving down the island where the newest ferry would be docking soon. She had been waiting months for this moment, thrilled to have her oldest friends back on their playground—the volunteers and various employees broke their parties up so Beverly could run past them without any delay. Her ramblings at how excited she was had gotten annoying over the past hour, and they were eager to be rid of the anticipation.

Patty excitedly jumped off the boat with Stan’s help, then she casually adjusting his shirt before trying to help Audra off the railing without murdering herself in her heels, “Come on, Cleopatra!”

Audra startled scream made Stan jump as one of her heels fell off, cutting the problem in half as the three struggled behind the other passengers.

“Just take them off?” Stan suggested, rolling his eyes when Audra glared at him.

“Do you have any idea of how much these cost me?!”

“Nothing. Your ex-husband got them for you,” Patty deadpanned.

Then, the two women laughed, leaving Stan to sigh with a small smile on his face.

Beverly laughed to herself while emerging onto the end of the dock, immediately pointing out her friends.

“Well, look at what the tide washed in?!” Beverly called. Patty and Audra instantly got into position, no questions asked, back to back, holding fake microphones to their lips. Stan knew about this, Patty told him she was part of a band. He gave them space and watched the whole reunion with expectation. “FOR ONE NIGHT!!!!” Patty cried.

Beverly struck a few seductive poses in her overalls.

“AND ONE NIGHT ONLY—” Audra continued. “BEVERLYYYYY AND THE DYNAMOOOOOOOOS!!”

The other boat passengers covered their ears as the three friends screeched with ecstasy, sprinting towards each other and jumping up and down like they were children.

Stan actually snorted, delighted to see his future wife so happy but wanting to cover his ears at the same time as well.

Beverly hadn’t seen them in years, the distance between Kalokairi and America seeming longer than ever. The island needed their spice, Patty’s cooking, Audra’s ...high standard of living. With them, the hotel was flickering with magic and songs, a sense of mystery and trouble lurking at every corner—Beverly missed them dearly, as they were her only true friends (besides Eddie) from the old days.

Beverly wrapped her arms around the two as they hugged quickly, a tiny bit more subdued than Ava and her friends. For the moment, at least.

“Look at youuuu!” Patty cheered with fascination, checking Beverly out thoroughly. “You, baby!” Beverly laughed. “Look at her!” Audra grinned as she ran her fingers through Beverly’s long hair.

“You look fantastic!” the redhead pointed out at the British woman. “You look like an old hippie!” Audra laughed. “Oooh, she looks fab!” Patty debunked as Beverly showed off her dungarees with pride.

“Where did you get these?!” Beverly asked, grabbing at Audra’s new pair of breasts.

“Husband number three!” Patty joked as Audra shoved her hands away while laughing.

The old friends stumbled into position once more, dancing in a circle as their chant went on. ***“Dynamos, dynamite! Sleep all day and WHOOP-O all night!!”***

The hotel workers couldn’t help but smile as they shook their heads, watching as Beverly nudged Patty while nodding at Stan, who was now walking towards them with a friendly smile.

“Is that...?” she drawled quietly before the blonde nodded, grinning like a fool as she made her way to her future husband.

“Bev, I want you to meet Stan Uris. Stan, this is my favorite singer, Beverly Marsh,” Patty promptly introduced the two, her arms wrapped around Stan’s arm as she watched them.

Using his free arm, Stan extended an arm towards Beverly with a friendly smile, “Nice to meet you—this island, is lovely.”

Beverly nodded, grinning before enthusiastically shaking his hand, “Hell yeah it is, and wait until you see my hotel. Patty mentioned you like birds, right? Well, there are lots of those that annoy me in the morning. So you’re gonna like it here.”

Stan’s face lit up, “I can’t wait, then.”

Afterward, Beverly guided the three to her blue jeep and sped up a good portion of the island. Trees and rocks flew by their blurred vision while the conversation flowed as if they hadn’t just met up for the first time in years.

It reminded Beverly of simpler times when they were young and adventurous. “So, any men at this wedding?” Audra asked casually,

trying to keep her hair straight in the wind, “Gorgeous Greeks of independent means?”

“Here we go!” Patty started, laughing, “Husband number four, please come in!!”

Beverly laughed at their antics while Stan, who was sitting in the back, shook his head.

“No! Not for me, for *her*!” The redhead claimed, pointing at the single mom, “Now that you have this hotel running and your daughter is about to get married, it’s time to find Mr. Right!”

“Oh please,” Beverly waved off, “Bor-ing!!!” she yelled into the air as Patty laughed.

“What about Eddie?” Audra asked, “Has he found a man for himself?”

“Nope! He’s scared Nick will find him dating someone weird,” Beverly scoffed out, still confused about the whole scenario Eddie had planted in his anxious little head.

“Great couple of role models you two are for Ava,” Audra snorted as Beverly turned on the hotel road, “Disaster gay and little hermit over here.”

“That’s me!” Beverly proudly claimed, “I’m a lone wolf—OW OW OWW!!”

Audra rolled her eyes affectionately as Patty began howling like wild wolves together, Stan arched his eyebrow as he amusedly watched them. He was slowly realizing that his dove was really comfortable around these two women, and he couldn’t wait to see how wild she could be during this weekend. He had his phone ready if he needed to record something funny to tease her about.

These were the moments they had missed over their time away from each other. Stupid little comments, Patty’s quips, Beverly’s refusal to settle down, and everything about Audra’s crazy, stylish life, however stressful it may be.

She parked the jeep once they made it halfway up the island, stopping where Nick and the rest of the hotel workers were moving decorations around for tomorrow's big celebration.

"So when are the love birds flying the nest?" Patty asked from the passenger seat.

"Oh god...who knows," Beverly groaned, "You know, I do not know what is going on in that child's head sometimes," She paused, thinking of her only child's charm and spontaneous spirit, "She wants a big white wedding, and she and Nick are making all kinds of plans for the hotel—sometimes I think they'll never leave."

"Yeah, but do you really want her to?" Patty asked.

"Well, I want what's best for her!" Beverly said seriously, before grinning, "Of course not!"

Patty and Audra laughed, knowing she'd say that.

And Stan shook his head, hopping out of the backseat and kissing Patty quickly when she hugged him close. They haven't discussed kids yet, but if Stan was being honest with himself—he wanted one. He knew Beverly's backstory, Patty had warned him about what he wasn't allowed to bring up if he ever found himself conversing alone with the woman. Which he appreciated because the last thing he wanted was to piss off Patty's dear friend. And besides, Stan respected Beverly for what she went through by herself.

Audra rolled her eyes at the couple affectionate display and looked at the hotel's entrance as a handsome, young man walked out hurriedly.

"Nick!" Beverly called, beckoning him.

Audra was surprised when she didn't recognize little Nick, "Oh my God!! Is that really you, Nicholas???" she gasped. Last time she had seen him, he was this sixteen-year-old kid.

"Come see my back-up girls!"

"Back-up girls my ass!" The other two whined.

“Audra! Patty! I haven’t seen you in... years?” Nick greeted them as he kissed Audra in the cheek and received Patty’s hug,

“Oh, hello!” he noticed Stan and surprised the older man by hugging him.

The three women smiled sweetly at the interaction. Nick was an affectionate man who wasn’t afraid to hug and kiss a man’s cheek without having to worry about stupid things like heteronormativity.

“H-Hello!” Stan stammered, a little surprised at the young man’s while awkwardly patting him on the back, “I’m Stan Uris,” he said as the brunette took a step back.

“I’m Nick! You must be Patty’s fiancéé, right? Well, nice to meet you, dude!” he beamed at the taller man.

Stan recovered quickly, used to Patty being this bright as well, “Dude?” he chuckled, “Yeah, nice to meet you too, dude.”

That made Nick smile even further. He turned to Patty and nodded approvingly, “I like him! You sure know how to choose ‘em.”

“He’s the leading man at tomorrow’s shindig!” Beverly told Stan proudly.

After the reunion and introductions, Nick offered them help to carry the luggage up the infernal staircase that led to the hotel — and Stan appreciated that since he wasn’t used to climbing so many stairs in a day.

And although Beverly led them with a grin on her face, she had no idea that a sailboat was on its way to change her life.

Notes for the Chapter:

hope ya'll liked it

reddie coming next chapter

3. Mamma Mia! What a Dancing Queen!

Summary for the Chapter:

donkey testicles

Notes for the Chapter:

Again, say with me, children:

Italic: One person singing. (except when it's obviously a flashback)

Bold and Italic: Chorus/and or more than two people singing.

Also, I know I promised Reddie in this chapter but it became long and I'm a little tired. They'll interact more next chapter!

I hope you do enjoy this chapter though, we have two songs here. Writing songfics is weird haha.

"You should've brought the iron lung!" Patty panted as Stan, trying not to break a sweat, helped his future wife climb up the last stairs as he held her hand.

After a long, sweaty, huffing and puffing walking up the stairs to the main hotel, Audra and Patty tiredly collapsed against a balcony, desperately fanning themselves through the summer heat. Stan was fanning Patty as well, looking less out of breath than the two women.

"Why did I wear stilettos?!!" Audra cried into the air.

"Oh my God..." Patty groaned as she sat down on the stone bench.

Audra sat next to her, dumping her things on the ground as Beverly looked at them with a shit-eating grin.

"You city girls lost your touch," she commented, receiving their glares welcomingly.

They only had a moment to recover, however, because someone emerged in the window above them and greeted their party with a squeal.

“Auntie Patty!”

“Hey!” Patty greeted tiredly, but with a smile on her face.

“Look at Ava!” Audra gushed in awe, eyes wide as she watched the young woman hurry away to come down and greet them, “She’s gotten so beautiful!”

“I know...” Beverly smiled with pride.

“Come here to me!!” Ava scurried out of the motel and ran into Patty’s arms, hugging her tightly. She was almost as tall as the older, now, much to her cringe and subtle pride.

“Ava Marsh,” Patty started, squeezing the redhead’s cheeks as she rolled her eyes at the affection, “You get more gorgeous every time I see you!”

“I bet you don’t remember me,” Audra sheepishly smiled beside them.

“Not with all that plastic surgery,” Patty quipped.

Beverly snorted.

“Of course I do!” Ava giggled, throwing her arms around the British woman, “Auntie Audra! You haven’t changed at all!”

Beverly smiled at the scene as the honorary family became reacquainted with each other, ending with Beverly wrapping her arms around Ava, keeping her contained in a tight embrace adoringly as she whined with nostalgia.

“Oh, look at my baby,” the motel owner cooed, “Her whole life ahead of her!”

“Oh please!” Ava replied dramatically, breaking from the hold, “I’m getting married, I’m not joining a convent!”

“Oooh, she’s feisty!” Audra pointed out, impressed, “I love that!”

“She’s a chip off the old block,” Patty teased.

They all chuckled lightly until Stan decided to finally make himself present, sliding next to Patty to smile towards Ava.

“Oh! Ava, this is Stan Uris—my future husband!” Patty introduced him, beaming at her honorary niece with love in her eyes.

“It’s nice to finally meet you, Ava, Patty talks about you a lot,” he extended his arm towards her, but Stan seemed to still haven’t learned his lesson from before—but at least he wasn’t as surprised as he was with Nick when Ava hugged him tightly.

“Hi!! It’s so nice to finally meet you! Welcome to Kalokairi!”

Stan’s smile widened, he couldn’t help it, the redhead girl was so full of energy, “Thank you, and congratulations on your wedding.”

“Thanks!” Ava said before walking off, busy with her own things, “Oh by the way—mom, uncle Eddie is looking for you! He says that there’s a pipe problem in the bathroom of one of the rooms,” Ava’s voice was distant as she kept on walking, but Beverly rolled her eyes.

She motioned for adults to follow, keeping her voice low.

“If she were more like me, she wouldn’t be getting married at twenty!” Beverly whispered worriedly, bringing up Patty’s comment before her daughter was introduced to Stan.

“Or married at all,” Audra reminded her friend.

Beverly laughed, “Ah! I meant to get the laundry down before you came!” she sheepishly chuckled while pulling sheets down from the hanging wire as Ava came drifting back in their direction.

“Uh oh! Audra’s going home!” Patty cackled as Stan looked around curiously.

“And you’d think with all this new technology they would figure out a machine that would make the beds,” Beverly sighed.

“And if they did,” Ava interrupted, taking the sheets from her, “You’d be going along behind it making them again. I know you, mom,” she kissed her cheek and walked off with the sheets, making the three women coo and Stan smile warmly.

“Awww!” Beverly replied lovingly, “But I am good at modern—modernizing—” she looked behind her to see Nick carrying a tray with three cups of water for Patty, Audra, and Stan, who thankfully accepted it, “Nick! Tell them about the Internets. He’s gonna put me on the line!”

“Online!” Ava corrected.

“I’m designing a website for Kalokairi,” Nick explained to their group, warm brown eyes sparkling with passion. “I just think this place has so much potential, but no one knows we’re here. So if I market it really, really well, then hopefully, people will come flooding in.”

“We just want this to be the ultimate romantic destination,” Ava elaborated, sliding into her fiancé’s side with a grin, “This was once supposed to be the side of Aphrodite’s fountain, you know, the goddess of love... and if you drank the water, you were supposed to find true love and perfect happiness,” as she said that, Nick and her exchanged an amorous look.

“I’ll have a glass of that,” Audra said.

“Yeah, I’ll have a bucket! And then I’ll dump it on your mom!” Patty added, receiving a mild glare from Beverly herself.

Ava smiled at Nick happily, kissing him quickly on the mouth before they left so Beverly could entertain her friends.

After showing Stan and Patty their own room, which was just down the hall of the floor from Audra’s room, Stan offered to stay behind and unpack to let his future wife properly catch up with her friends

Audra’s beach dress and heels weren’t making anything easy, and it took them ten more minutes to walk up to their hotel room across the

hall from Ava's. The trio wanted to collapse onto the bed right away, but something was pressing at Beverly's interest—while the topic was still in the air, she decided to bring it up.

"Aphrodite's spa, hm?" Audra repeated, recounting what Ava had said earlier.

"I thought you didn't want boatloads of tourists here?" Patty asked.

"Well not boatloads, no, but...you know. A few more would be nice," Beverly tried laughing it off, leading them towards the bathroom so they could freshen up a bit. She turned around almost immediately, though, remembering she had forgotten to fix something important, "Okay—now... the thing about the toilet. If it doesn't flush right away, just go, and... come back in a while and it should..." Beverly shook her head, making her hair bounce, "Nothing works around here except for me."

Patty shared a look with Audra as they followed Beverly to the window.

"I mean—I've been running this hotel for fifteen years, and I have never had a day off!" Before Beverly could react, the window she reached for fell off its hinges and onto the cobblestone below. She gasped and frantically looked down below, around to see if anyone was hurt—the employees looked up at her with knowing expressions. These things happened a lot, despite Beverly's best efforts to maintain the motel's stability.

"Oh my God!! I'm so sorry! I'll get it fixed right away!"

Audra and Patty watched with worry as their friend sighed deeply. She turned to them with an exasperated expression, a familiar sense of anticipation filled the room as a small beat began to play in the back of their minds, signaling a song coming on just like in their youth. Only this time, the song wasn't about Beverly's heartbreak.

"I work all night, I work all day, to pay the bills I have to pay..." Beverly began with a melancholic tone.

"Ain't it sad?" the employees chorused.

"And still there never seems to be a single penny left for me—don't sit down there—" the redhead sang, briefly warning Patty before she sat on a broken chair.

"That's too bad..." Patty and Audra followed.

"In my dreams, I have a plan, if I got me a wealthy man... I wouldn't have to work at all, I'd fool around and have a ball," She wistfully sang as she grabbed a pair of binoculars by the other (unbroken) window to look through them at a yacht floating on the sea.

Then she scoffed and walked out of the room.

Beverly ran down into the alley and snatched the broken window up, trying to run away from the employees shoving the motel's bills and other fixable items at her.

"Money, money, money, must be funny, in the rich man's world... Money, money, money, always sunny, in the rich man's world—Ahaaaa aaahaaa," Beverly's exasperated and tired expression ignored all the attempts of her employers chasing after at.

Patty and Audra followed after Beverly, joining the song as she pushed away from their attempts to hand over credit cards, curtesy of Audra's third ex-husband.

"All the things I could do—"

"(AH!)—if I had a little money, it's a rich man's world!"

"It's a rich man's world," Beverly sang to her friends as the doorknob of a door she tried to open fell off.

"A man like that is hard to find," Audra sang to her when the three made their way inside of the kitchen, where the cook ladies rose from the table to pretend they were working now that their boss was here.

"... but I can't get him off my mind," Beverly insisted, shrugging stubbornly.

"Ain't it sad?" Patty and the cooks chorused with a sad tone.

“And if he happens to be free I bet he wouldn't fancy me...”

“That's too bad!”

“So I must leave, I'll have to go... To Las Vegas or Monaco! And win a fortune in a game, my life will never be the same!”

Money, money, money

Must be funny In the rich man's world

Money, money, money

Always sunny In the rich man's world

"Ahaaaa aaahaaaaa!!"

“All the things I could do, if I had a little money!”

“It's a rich man's world!” Patty and Audra sighed.

The trio hurried to the courtyard, rushing to set up tables and every other decoration for Ava's wedding.

Money, money, money Must be funny In the rich man's world
Money, money, money Always sunny In the rich man's world

"Ahaaaaaa aaaaahaaAaAaAaAaA~"

All the things I could do If I had a little money It's a rich man's world

“It's a rich man's world...” Beverly stated with the other female co-workers as they got the blankets from the drying hanger and she buckled up her tools belt.

Suddenly, the ground below everyone's feet began to crack underneath them—everything shook for a moment, only stopping when the dolphin symbol on the cobblestone had been broken in half. Everyone screeched as Beverly forced herself to laugh at the situation.

“What's going on?!” Audra inquired with a shocked smile while

carrying a bottle of champagne.

Beverly tapped her feet on the dolphin, “Did you feel it? The earth moved, darling, we’re falling apart here.” Beverly joked though the expressions of her friends told her it hadn’t been very amusing, “Don’t think about it too much. Come on!”

Beverly snatched a bottle of champagne off her hand. “Let’s go have fun!”

Beverly’s fun included fixing the window in Audra’s room as the woman herself walked around in her bath towel after a much-needed shower. Patty went through the redhead’s expensive bags, stuffed to the brim with makeup and other useless cosmetics.

“Audra’s packed for a world tour!” she exclaimed, digging through an especially expensive-looking makeup bag, “Oh! Bev, Bev!” she beckoned.

Beverly glanced over her shoulder, pinning the last of the window down with her electric screwdriver.

Patty was holding up a blue g-string thong that would hardly fit Audra, flinging it across the room like a slingshot. “Does she wear it, or floss with it?!”

“Floss you!” Audra hollered from the bathroom.

“Is it edible, Audrie?” Beverly teased.

“Meow meow!”

Patty laughed and snatched something else from the bag, reading the fancy label of the expensive cosmetic container as the owner exited the bathroom with a towel wrapped around her wet hair.

“The world’s most luxurious moisturizer—contains flakes of 24-carat gold and extracts of donkey testicle!”

“You’re just jealous!” Audra said as she grabbed her champagne flute, Beverly doing the same as she laughed at her friends’ quarrel.

“At a *thousand dollars* a dollop!”

“Darling, that’s the price you have to pay if you wanna drink before eleven o’clock in the morning!” Audra cheered.

“And we do!” Beverly growled.

“We do!” Patty followed, already with her flute in hand as she giggled.

The friends clinked their glasses together before guzzling the burning liquid, plopping back onto the couch tiredly, leaning against one another for comfort as the pleasant buzzing feeling settled within their bodies.

After Ava made sure Nick had everything ready for his bachelor party, the two said goodbye for a while as Ava ran a few more errands for her mom, putting some boxes away in the old goat house so Eddie wouldn’t have to do it later; he deserved a much-needed rest, if only for an hour, so Ava was content to help until it was time for her own bachelorette party.

Lisa and Ali were at the beach already, flirting and drinking cute cocktails while getting some sun—most of the guests had arrived already (mostly just some mainland friends of Ava’s, as Beverly didn’t have time for any personal relationships with the exception of her daughter, Eddie, Nick and bandmates), so when Ava spotted three strangers waiting around in front of a storage unit by a cliff, she became curious. Had Nick invited some people to their wedding after all, despite wanting a small wedding with limited guests?

“Hi,” Ava greeted the men politely, who were facing away from her as she set a box down. They seemed to be admiring the splendor of the island, the way the sun illuminated every blue shade and creaky hinge, “May I help you?” The men turned around all at once.

“Sure!” one of the taller men smiled lazily, loose Hawaiian shirt blowing in the wind, “We’re here for the wedding. I’m Richie Tozier.”

Ava’s eyes widened in shock, “Huh?” she dumbly whispered.

"I'm Denbrough," The shortest, blue-eyed one introduced, "Bill Denbrough."

"Ben Hanscom," the third said in a pleasant, patient voice.

Ben Hanscom... the person her mother had fallen in love with on this very island so many years ago.

At her dumbfounded expression, Ben stuck his sunglasses in the pocket of his dress-shirt, waiting for a response from the young woman. He had absolutely no idea of the history behind the young bride-to-be. "You are expecting us, aren't you?" he asked her gently, and hopeful.

Ava immediately grinned herself out of shock, loosening her stiff pose while simultaneously forcing herself not to embrace her father after—Well... she doesn't actually KNOW which one is her father but she just wanted to scream from happiness because they actually came! The three of them were here!

"Oh my god, yes!" Ava confirmed breathlessly.

"You're not... Beverly's daughter, are you?" Ben asked as Richie snatched his sunglasses off, staring at Ava with recognition.

The auburn-haired bride shrugged innocently, giving away her identity with that casual, bright smile that tried masking her energy. The three older men had to keep themselves from embracing Ava, as her lips curved the exact same way as Beverly's did.

"I thought you looked familiar," Richie commented lightly. Ava's nose, jaw shape, hairstyle, and overall attitude were unmistakably similar to a certain someone, "Uh... Eve?"

"It's Ava."

"Well, Eve is Greek. I used to have a great-aunt living on this island named Eve," Richie told her, thoughtful.

"Well..." Ava paused as excitement for discovering another possible clue came up, "I'm named after an Eve."

“Uh... would you mind if we see our rooms before we see your mother?” Bill asked.

“Sure!”

“It’s just that I’d quite like to freshen up before the... big reunion...” Bill mumbled nervously as the other man nodded.

Since they were at a romantic resort, the three strangers turned with their bags, heading towards the main branch of the Greek-style hotel, only to be stopped by Ava’s shout when she remembered that this was supposed to be a secret—a huge, major secret that would get her in trouble with her mom. The only thing saving her was the fact that her wedding was tomorrow. You can’t kill your daughter on her wedding day, right?

“No!” The old lovers turned to her in alarm, “I mean... yes! But—come this way,” Ava motioned behind herself at the dingy old goathouse she had just been cleaning.

After hesitating only a moment, Bill, Richie, and Ben adjusted the bags over their shoulders and followed Ava, who led them into the goathouse gleefully, ecstatic to finally meet the men who might be her long-lost father. Although it was a bit concerning that she hadn’t felt which man struck a deep connection within her heart, Ava wasn’t worried. All she had to do was get to know each of them before making the connection that would ultimately change her life forever.

And maybe even change her mother’s forever.

“It’s just right up here—” Bill stumbled behind Ben as they ducked under seashell decorations, squeezing into a small portion of the building that looked like a dark tunnel.

Her figure reappeared when she noticed they stopped following her, “Come on!” she beckoned, disappearing again.

Ben smiled knowingly as Bill looked a little uncomfortable, but Richie, who was having the time of his life, laughed as he bravely passed by the two men to go after Ava.

They had only been sitting for a moment, laughing together while talking about the good olden days, before Beverly sat up frantically, going to set her flute down on the table.

“Oh my god! I’ve got a crack in my courtyard—I gotta go fix it—”

“Hey, listen, Bev—”

“I’m serious, move, Audrie—”

“Sit down!” Audra ordered as she pushed her towards Patty, who an arm around her waist to keep her still, “Sit!”

Beverly was forced back into the couch, eyes wide with surprise and giggles pouring off her lips as she looked between her friends incredulously, “She won’t let me go!” the redhead giggled at Patty.

“I know, but listen, Bev—I know you’re going to make a fortune with web’s—”

“Pff! With web’s—” Patty snorted.

“I mean with the web—”

“With Nick’s site,” Beverly corrected excitedly.

“With Nick’s site,” Audra nodded, spreading the expensive lotion over the bare skin of her legs, “But are you going to be okay until then?”

“I think Audrie is offering to pawn her bling,” Patty elaborated.

“No, seriously, Bev—do you need a loan?”

“Oh my god, no—noooo, sweetheart, I’m just whining!” Beverly shook her head frantically, waving off the idea, “You know me... I don’t need to be taken care of.”

Nothing Beverly said had ever been so true. Her mom died when she was still young and her own father hadn’t taken care of her—quite the opposite, he had been a complete monster towards her—before she became pregnant with no husband. Not only had Beverly raised Ava by herself, educating her and teaching her all she knew, but she

had also been keeping a hotel running for the past fifteen-years, entirely on her own. Sure, it would be nice to share the burden with someone, but Beverly had never been the kind of person to ask for help—she would much rather figure out things on her own, just like she did when she became pregnant with Ava.

God bless Eddie Kaspbrak. Even though Beverly had been alone for the first four years of Ava's life—the man showed up in her life when she most needed someone by her side. And even though the two weren't a traditional couple, they formed their own little family that was about to become legal through marriage. But Eddie was another sad tale that needed a happy ending, both Audra and Patty liked him a lot and Nick was an angel as well—but the two women desperately wished something could change for them both, and for the better.

Hadn't life turned out well, despite the solo parenting job?

"Yeah, but are you being taken care of?" Audra asked, hinting at something.

"What do you mean?"

"Are you getting any?" the British woman asked seriously.

The hotel owner thought about this for a second.

"Oh, you mean—" Beverly triggered the drill in her hand, the sudden revving making Audra nearly jump out of her towel as Patty laughed lazily, sipping at her drink in amusement. Beverly cackled and leaned back further into the couch, putting the drill back into her tool belt.

"Down boy, down!" she laughed, before calming down, "No, it takes too much energy."

"Yeah... just more plumbing to be maintained, isn't it?" Patty joked.

"Yeah," Beverly snorted as she recalled wistfully. To think, at one point in her life they had all been boy (and occasionally, girl) crazy, running around, looking for adventure and romance, "Oh God, I'm so glad that part of my life is over! You know, seriously—I do not miss it, at all."

Audra and Patty shared a look, content to listen as Beverly cleared her throat and took another sip of her champagne.

Those days after graduation were crazy times. After basically running away from home, Beverly traveled across America and even visited Paris for a week, staying here and there, writing songs whenever the moment hit, performing at bars and staying up till dawn with Patty and Audra... everything was fun and exciting.

But when *he* came along... things changed. The music became sad, the dances nostalgic, like a blurry memory, and the adventures became a desperate attempt to close the wound, to find something more after being left behind.

Beverly didn't miss those times. Not at all. What she had with her daughter, Eddie, and Nick was so much healthier, so much more entertaining and beautiful than running around the island like a wild child. The singing, she did miss a little more, but as for all the other baggage that came with relationships...

She could do without.

That was the truth, right? Or was she lying or crying to herself again? Well, either way... tomorrow wasn't about her. It wasn't about her past romance. Tomorrow was about Ava and Nick, and nothing and no one else could ruin that celebration.

"Where's Beverly?" Ben asked confusedly, wondering if he was steps away from his flame without knowing.

The group stopped abruptly, seeing no door or exit beside the layers of straw and old junk put away in storage. Ava giggled and pointed upwards.

"Up you go!"

Richie grinned when he realized where they were going. He had only been in the attic of this building once, over twenty years ago after one of the Dynamos' shows in that small pub.

Ava opened the hatch on the ceiling, testing the railing (briefly)

before motioning them upwards.

Richie went first, giving an unsurprised expression when he saw the exact same room from years before. Sketches hung on the window, knick-knacks (aka, his old set of bagpipes), blankets and sheets and every miscellaneous object in between—Richie never liked cleaning, and it was comforting to know that fact hadn't changed over the past two decades.

Ben followed, grinning at the cozy scene before hoisting himself up, making the place his own in seconds. Bill was less enthused at the tiny attic space, stern features sharpening more when the idea of sharing his room came to mind.

Ava launched herself up once the men were settled, taking in their surroundings as the young bride observed them with a silent grin.

"You know, I don't want to seem ungrateful for the scenic tour, but might I be shown my room now?" Bill asked politely. He was already sweating.

"Well don't hold your breath, Big Bill, but I think this is your room," Richie broke the news.

Ben's mind was still elsewhere, the place it had been since he before married Hannah... he repeated his earlier question with more intent for an answer this time. The other men listened, eager for the answer themselves.

"Can we see Beverly now?" Ben asked.

Ava decided dropping a bomb like this would be a good judge of character for the potential fathers. "I sent the invites," she beamed, "My mom doesn't know anything!"

Simultaneously, all three men sighed deeply and dropped their heads, but none further than Ben.

To think, he had come here for this wedding with so much hope, thinking Beverly was ready to forgive him, ready to... do whatever about their relationship and it turns out Beverly didn't want to reunite. She would probably kick him in the balls if she saw him at

the wedding tomorrow!

Richie wasn't as surprised as the other two, but then again, he and Beverly were on good terms, as far as breakups go.

Bill wasn't sure if he was relieved or displeased.

"Well she's done so much for me and she's always talking about you guys and the good old days," Ava explained, his girlish charm showing almost as much as Beverly's would, "I thought what an amazing surprise for her... that you are all going to be at my wedding!"

"Hang on—" Ben stopped the bride, shaking his head before lowering his voice, "Ava—I can't be here. The last time I saw your mother, she said she never wanted to see me again!"

"Oh, but that was years ago!" Ava reminded him, "Please? It would mean... a lot to me if you stayed for my wedding."

"Why?" Ben asked obliviously.

The group stood in silence for a second as Ava declined to answer. Bill was beginning to feel very badly about invading on Beverly's territory, and although he had never been on the receiving end of Beverly's wrath, he figured it was best to never find out what that felt like. They had to leave at once.

"Listen," the blue-eyed man began sympathetically, "I can see that you've been through a great deal of trouble, but might I suggest that we all reconvene on your boat, Richie?"

"Good idea," Ben nodded.

"Nope."

Bill and Ben gave Richie a crazy look as the latter plopped down on a small mattress much too tiny for his long legs.

"What? Why?" Bill questioned.

"It's an adventure, Denbrough—it's good for you," the curly-haired

man grinned, winking at the writer.

“Oh... I see.”

“Okay—” Ava interrupted Bill’s escape plan, trying to grab hold of the situation once more, “When I sent the invites, it was a long shot that you’d even reply, and now you’ve come all this way for a wedding... surely there must have been some special reason for you to be here?” Ava teased thoughtfully, “Like... some siren call, maybe?”

All three men burst out laughing at the bride’s charming response, shaking their heads while remembering every occasion Beverly captured them with the same twist of words. She certainly had a way of seeing things, and it seemed this trait passed to the wonderful Ava.

Ben sat down trying to wipe a goofy smile off his lips.

“You’re a little minx, you know that?” Ben chuckled, “You’re just like your mother—I’m glad my boys haven’t met you. They’d never recover.”

“You have sons?” Ava asked in amazement. But deep inside, all she could think about was the word ‘half-brothers’.

“Yes, two,” he nodded, “... and someday I’d like to bring them here.”

“Like you used to bring my mother?”

Ben made eye-contact with Ava, who smiled gently back. The journal had more details than she revealed to Lisa and Ali. Ben was the first person willing to explore the island with Beverly, having lived in an abandoned shack on Kalokairi for a few months out of the summer, during his engagement to Hannah. If only he knew about the diary...

Suddenly, a familiar humming approached the goathouse.

Everyone in the attic knew who that humming belonged to. Of course, it was Beverly Marsh outside of the building, putting away some old decorations not to be used for the wedding tomorrow evening. What was she doing on this side of the island?! Shouldn’t she have been running around with her old bandmates or

something?! Or at least talking to Eddie about the pipe situation!!

These were Ava's panicked thoughts as all the men stood, drifting towards the sound as if in a trance.

"It's Bev," Richie said, eyes sparkling with excitement. He wanted to see his friend so badly.

"No... no no!" Ava protested in a forcibly hushed voice, holding her hands out to stop their advances, "Listen, listen, she can't know! I'm gonna go—please stay. Promise me that you will not tell anybody I invited you. Okay? Promise?"

"You got it, baby," Richie agreed, finding the whole ordeal amusing and fun.

"I might regret it, but okay," Bill shrugged.

"It's a promise," Ben nodded. He had been on the other end of Beverly's wrath before and had no desire to see Ava suffer the same fate.

The bride to be flashed them one last worried smile before taking the wooden window panel clear off and climbing his way out, as Beverly had entered the goathouse downstairs and would immediately know something was up.

Bill held the window, adding one final question onto his list of much-needed traveling supplies, "There wouldn't, by any chance, happen to be a trouser press on the island, would there?" although born in America, living in the U.K for twenty years has changed his vocabulary to a more British one. Sometimes there would be an American accent, but it was mostly English by now.

Ava abruptly shut the window panels, scurrying away and leaving the men to fend for themselves—unfortunately, the noise of the window alerted Beverly below.

There were no more goats in this building, so the only explanation could be people; but what kind of loons would be creeping around in the attic of a smelly old goathouse? Ever the adventurer, Beverly decided to figure it out when the floorboards creaked above, proving

the presence of not only one creeper, but a few. She set the decoration aside and headed to the attic door on the ceiling, stepping onto the bottom stair while pushing the wood up—

Beverly almost slammed the door back down, but her attention had been shocked into a frozen position—it couldn't be. It wasn't! She had seen it wrong! That couldn't be... there was no possible way that — Beverly blinked twice, wide blue eyes latching onto the first person standing to the left. Tall, broad shoulders, lean posture, dorky fancy clothes that were too short, dorky reddish-brown hair, straight eyebrows, narrowed eyes, as intense as ever... even straighter lips, ones Beverly had kissed passionately after the latter took a socially awkward risk and professed his love for her inside of a restaurant by serenading her...

“Bill?”

The professional image of Bill Denbrough rewinded back to twenty years ago, rock & roll hair, eyeliner, outfit and all. That was him! Beverly didn't believe her eyes! Oh, how she felt so wrecked, breaking Bill's heart by leaving him behind, thinking he wasn't willing to take a risk on the island with him... There was another person.

Who was that? With the eyes tattooed on both knees, the tapping feet, and swaying body, like they were listening to the beat of the ocean? It wasn't. No freaking way. The wild curly hair, the long spider legs, sexy tan skin, covered by a closed shirt this time around, not five buttons open like when they were cruising around Kalokairi together on his crappy little boat... that wasn't. But it was. There was absolutely no mistaking that lazy expression.

“Trashmouth?”

Beverly gasped again, heart going disgustingly crazy with both panic and something else she couldn't (or wouldn't) describe. But that wasn't all. Beverly was terrified to look, judging on the pattern of the first two freaks creeping around in her old goathouse—but curiosity had killed Beverly twenty years ago, and it killed her again now.

“I wasn't joking yesterday... I was serious,” Beverly confessed as she and

Ben sat in the little rowboat, swaying in the early afternoon water, "I want to stay here. And I think you should, too."

Ben Hanscom, looking as handsome as ever, kept his trusting brown eyes on Beverly. They didn't leave for even a moment.

"I think we should make a choice to do something radical, and wonderful, to live in this extraordinary place with someone— someone miraculous!" The free-spirit continued dreamily. She took a second to study Ben's expression, realizing he had said nothing in agreement to this vision, "Ha... I told you you'd think it was crazy."

A fond smile crept to Ben's lips. He held his hands up innocently.

"I don't think it's crazy."

"That'll do," Beverly chuckled. "... For now."

Beverly let the door fall shut and allowed her memories to pull a song out.

"I was cheated by you, and I think you know when. So I made up my mind, it must come to an end!"

Beverly ran out of the goathouse, closing the doors behind her as she leaned onto the stone wall, crossing her arms while tapping her feet almost as if she was a disappointed mother, "Look at me noooooow, will I ever learn?" A lovesick grin spread on her lips as she started hugging herself, her cheeks flushed as if she was a teenager again, "I don't know how, but I suddenly lose control..." she rolled her body across the wall, accidentally bumping into a goat, "There's a fire within my soul."

"Just one look and I can hear a bell ring... One more look and I forget everything..."

Against her will, but with her heart, Beverly looked at the window on the other side of the goathouse—behind those panels stood three men who had once meant the world to her. But... was seeing them really a good idea?

Of course not. But Beverly couldn't resist. Not back then, not now,

not ever.

Mamma mia, here I go again

My my, how can I resist you?

Mamma mia, does it show again

My my, just how much I've missed you?

Climbing her way up to the window, Beverly was disappointed to find a wood stopper with posters of the Dynamos hiding her view of the men. When had that gotten put in?! Undeterred, she snuck onto the roof of the goathouse, eyes blown back with shock and a strange, fluttering sense of anticipation. It was about as crazy as anything she would have done in her youth, but as long as Ava didn't see her acting boy-crazed...

She wasn't hallucinating, right? No. Ben Hanscom was not someone you could bring to life through a hologram.

Everything from those narrowed hazel eyes to those sculpted, toned biceps was unique, one of a kind, just like Beverly herself. The reasons why these three men were in one room together, Beverly didn't think of at the moment—that wasn't important. Getting one more look to confirm their identities was enough. Who was he kidding; one final look was never enough.

Yes, I've been brokenhearted

Blue since the day we parted

Why, why did I ever let you go?

Mamma mia, now I really know

My my, I could never let you go

She stepped on the roof's tiles but backed away when they made a creaking sound. So, optionally, she chose to lean over the roof's edge and swing her body upside down to peek inside from one of the dirty windows.

“I was angry and sad when I knew we were through,” when she got the confirmation that she had not hallucinated them, Beverly returned to the rooftop, backing away from the window as if it has burned her, *“I can't count all the times that I've cried over you!”*

“Look at me now... will I ever learn?” she lied down, tapping onto the green hatch on the roof, *“I don't know how!! But I suddenly lose control... there's a fire within my soul!!!”*

(Just one look) and I can hear the bell ring!

(One more look) and I forget everything!

Mamma mia, here I go again!!

My my, how can I resist you?

Mamma mia, does it show again

My my, just how much I've missed you?

Beverly crept her way to the hatch on the roof of the building, having not been opened in years; the hotel owner desperately pulled at the handle, urging the rusty hinges upwards. It flung open suddenly, falling backward and sending Beverly flying, but this revealed nothing, as none of the men were standing underneath the makeshift window. Beverly gave a huff, pulling herself up and leaning forward, just wanting to get a little peek... that's all! That's all he wanted! An excuse to admire the three men she had fallen in love with as a youth!

“Yes, I've been brokenhearted! Blue since the day we parted... Why, why did I ever let you go?”

Mamma mia, now I really know

I should not have let you go—WOW!

Something like the winds of fate gave Beverly one last push, and losing her balance, the lead singer tumbled into the goathouse, thankfully landing on an air-mattress that had just been blown up—her feet remained in the air as she took in her surroundings, peering

up with the intentions of glaring at the wind.

What Beverly saw instead was a more scenic view than the blue sky. Her heart (previously frozen from the scary fall) paused before hammering loudly with absolute surprise; it had not seen these faces in person for over twenty years. It was back to 1995 all over again when three men stepped forward and peered down at the handsome Dynamo leader, smiles all around.

“You always knew how to make an entrance,” Ben commented, giving her a warm smile.

Beverly’s mouth dropped open, but closed right back up as the men chuckled, their own gazes as bright as hers while she took-in the images ahead, matching each profile to the grown-ups who used to run with him in Paris, Greece’s mainland and Kalokairi alike... had that really been so long ago? The memories were so fresh, so real upon seeing the culprits of Beverly’s agony and happiness.

“I’d better be dreaming, you better not be here...” Beverly threatened lightly.

“You want me to pinch you, Bev?” Richie reached out with the intent to pinch the hippie’s leg, to which Beverly squirmed away and began laughing despite herself, swatting his teasing fingers away.

“No! You keep your hands to yourself, Richie Tozier!”

“There’s something I haven’t heard in years,” Richie quipped and Bill laughed at the exchange.

“You probably don’t recognize me, do you?” Bill asked, though his expression was hopeful but a little anxious.

“Bill!” Beverly gasped, eyes softening right away, “It is you!”

“I’ve... probably changed a bit... but you certainly haven’t.”

With great reluctance, one built up over the past two decades, Beverly turned her eyes to the handsome, dark-brown haired CEO who was the great Ben Hanscom. Ben’s smile lingered still as he shook his head in awe, looking over Beverly like he did oh so long

ago. He quietly voiced his agreement with Bill's statement.

"Not at all."

Damnit, the things that voice DID to her...

Beverly immediately began squirming around, desperate to get on her feet and look somewhat presentable in front of her old flames.

Richie and the others chuckled at the mother's struggle, backing away to give her space—to ignore her lingering heartbreak, the urge to wrap all three into a hug amongst other various emotions, Beverly fiddled with her overall strap while scanning over the images set in front of her.

That was Richie alright. Same height, skin a bit rougher from years of adventuring on the sea, the exact expression of fondness when he looked at her...

Bill was the same, too, although his style had taken a drastic turn. His rock n' roll hair was cropped short and styled like a wave, his clothes business-like, a very fitting look for his actual personality, though Beverly found herself missing the spontaneous flare of the wannabe rock band singer.

Then there was Ben.

Why oh why did he have to age so well?!

"Why—Why are you here, what are you doing here?!" Beverly rambled, facing them with a sudden strike of panic. All her lovers in the same room! That couldn't mean anything good! The three men gave each other wary glances before Richie took the lead.

"I'm writing a travel piece, ya know, taking a break from my shitty comedic status."

"I'm here on a...spontaneous holiday," Bill answered hesitantly.

"Uh...huh," Beverly wondered before she turned to Ben.

He made a few hand gestures while struggling to answer, "Umm... I

just dropped in to say—hi,” Ben softly told her, covering for Ava but not lying at all about his intentions.

“Okay, okay... what—what is this?” Beverly mumbled. Heart fluttering with confusion. Was God trying to punish her or something? Was she supposed to apologize for all the relationships not working out?

“It’s one of those serendipitous moments in life when three complete strangers share a common thought,” Richie gave for an explanation, shrugging casually as she gave her a toothy grin.

Both Ben and Bill nodded at his statement, going along to protect Ava’s secret.

The stranger mention should have given Beverly a moment to relax, but it didn’t.

“Strangers? You don’t know each other?”

“That’s generally the definition,” Ben replied weakly.

“Okay... good,” Beverly nodded. The air mattress was in her way, and Bill had to push the flying object to the side so it narrowly avoided hitting his face when she kicked it, “But who—why are you here, who said you could stay in my old goathouse?”

“Didn’t catch the name,” Richie lied easily, glancing at the other men.

“Greek lady,” Ben offered.

“Well—she spoke Greek...” Bill helped.

A suspicious pause. Beverly grabbed at a few straws.

“Yeah—Or maybe she said we couldn’t stay in the old goathouse!” Richie then exclaimed, pretending to be confused.

“Yeah, maybe that was it—” Ben played along, his expression lost.

“She spoke Greek,” Bill nodded.

"Yeah, the Greek so..." Richie continued rambling, trying not to laugh at the ridiculous amount of times they have brought up this lie.

"Yeah, that's it—you can't stay here because..." now it was Beverly's turn to grab at straws, "I'm closed. And I'm full. And I'm busy, I'm really... I have a wedding, my—local girl's getting married," she quickly added, screaming internally for almost slipping about her daughter.

"Beverly," Ben interrupted kindly, "Don't worry about us. Richie here is used to roughing it."

"And Bill here..." Richie started, but just when he couldn't think of an adjective good enough to describe him, he was thankful when Bill spoke.

"I'm spontaneous," Bill almost smiled.

"*Spontaneous*," Richie agreed, biting his lower lip as he tried not to snort.

Beverly really didn't care for their answers. Her mind was trained on the person giving the excuses (he was quite good at that), the first person to ever break her strong, powerful heart, in two pieces. Ben Hanscom. He kept looking at her like she was the world. It was sickening. He had the audacity to look her in the eyes after what happened all those years ago?

"What about you?" Beverly accused sternly, face going hard.

"Just wanted to see the island," Ben said quietly, unthreatening, "You know what it meant to me."

I thought I did.

"Okay..." The situation was tense enough as it was—Beverly was eager to be rid of it, so she might be able to clear her flustered thoughts once and for all. This was too much to take in. She needed a break. If Beverly were younger, she would have fled the island, letting the wind drift her wherever and whenever, but now, her shoulders felt old, too tired to grab a boat ticket and sail, so the hotel owner settled for stepping backward and reaching for the pull-up

door on the floor of the goathouse.

“Kay I’m gonna... I’m going to arrange for a boat—to take you all back to the mainland.”

“I have a boat, Bev,” Richie informed her.

“You have a boat?! Good, get on it!” Beverly managed to pull the door up and hurried down the stairs, “And anchors away. Away away!”

“Hey, Beverly?” Ben called.

For some reason, Beverly stopped at his command, looking up and finding all three men smiling down at her.

They spoke at the same time.

“It’s good to see you.”

Beverly ran as fast as her long strides allowed, only glancing back once with a horrified expression—she had to be hallucinating. This was not happening. Three old lovers could not be on her island a day before her daughter’s wedding! Beverly’s emotions were getting the better of her as she ran towards the bar outside the hotel’s lobby, where Stan, Patty, and Audra were having a few drinks to start the day.

A handsome, black man named Pepper, one of Nick’s best mates, and that also worked as a bartender slid Audra’s drink to her seductively, giving a sly smirk.

“Now baby this should tickle your taste buds,” he purred.

“Down big fella,” Audra laughed pitifully, “I’m old enough to be your mother.”

“Grandmother,” Patty snickered as Stan nodded in agreement before sipping on his colorful, sweet cocktail. He wasn’t much to drink, a glass of red wine was enough, but these were so delicious that he couldn’t help it.

Beverly came sprinting up to the group just as Pepper wiggled his eyebrows at Audra playfully—but her mind wasn't focused on the flirtatious bartender. By now the mother was in tears, frantically trying to put up a good front in case Ava was near. Her friends looked on in concern as Beverly huffed out a question.

“Where's Ava?”

“I think she went down to the beach,” Pepper motioned.

“What's up?” Audra asked.

There was a sniffle, then Beverly exploded with tears, running off into the restrooms behind her without so much as a word of explanation.

Patty patted Stan's shoulder before she hurried off her stool and followed after, Audra chugging along while taking a drink of her margarita. By the time they made it into the restrooms, leaving the door open behind them, Beverly was bawling inside a stall, locking the door so the others couldn't get in.

Stan felt awkward, he turned on his stool with his drink as he watched the whole ordeal with a confused expression.

“Bev?” Patty asked worriedly.

The crying noises got louder.

“Bev, what's wrong?” Audra could see that they weren't going to get to Beverly like this. She and Patty exchanged a look, and Patty held her finger up, getting an idea. She cleared her throat quickly, letting the lyrics come to her as she began to sing.

“Chiquitita, tell me what's wroooooong...”

Patty nudged Audra, who needed a moment to remember the next part. “Oh, me—um—I have neveer seen such sorroooow.”

The pitchy tone made Patty roll her eyes irritably, but they harmonized the next part better, trying to coax Beverly out of the stall.

“Iiiiiin your eyes and the wedding is... tomorrow!”

Audra stepped on Patty’s back as she got on her knees, peeking through the bottom opening of the stall while red redhead peered over the top, trying to continue the song.

“How I hate to see you like—” A snotty-nosed, teary-eyed Beverly looked up miserably. *“This!”* Audra scrunched her nose with disgust as she tried to balance herself.

“There is no way, you can deny it!” Patty struggled out.

Beverly shook her head as they harmonized again; other employees along with Stan were watching through the restroom open door, their eyebrows raised with amusement—and Stan almost could laugh. They were used to Beverly’s weird habits, but things always got a little weirder whenever her friends visited.

“Iiiiiii can see that you’re oh so sad—”

Beverly burst out of the stall, sending Audra back into the stone wall and Patty flopping to the ground.

“So quiet!” they shrieked.

The hotel manager slammed the restroom door shut, collapsing back onto one of the sinks in emotional exhaustion; Patty and Audra collected themselves quickly and walked over, comforting their friend the only way they knew how: by song.

Chiquitita, tell me the truth

I’m a shoulder you can cry on

They walked up behind Beverly and wrapped their arms around the woman, Audra let her rest her head on her shoulder.

Your best friend, I’m the one you must rely on

You were always sure of yourself

They helped Beverly sit down on the counter, between the two sinks

as she cried even more. They sat next to her but Patty comically almost fell inside of one of the sinks, making Beverly chuckle a little.

Now I see you've broken a feather

I hope we can patch it up together

Chiquitita, you and I know

Audra and Patty jumped out of the counter and the actress reached for her purse, taking tissues out of it and passing them repeatedly to Patty who started wiping away all of the tears and snot from Beverly's beautiful face.

How the heartaches come and they go and the scars they're leaving

You'll be dancing once again and the pain will end

You will have no time for grieving

Chiquitita, you and I cry

But the sun is still in the sky and shining above you

Let me hear you sing once more like you did before

Sing a new song, Chiquitita

They put a flower on her hair and Audra helped Beverly sip from her delicious margarita, but she couldn't handle it anymore—Beverly sang with a broken heart and a broken voice. “Try once more, like I did before...” Beverly finally joined in, wiping her tears away, “Sing a new song—It's her dad,” she finally admitted, taking a much-needed drink of Audra's margarita.

“Whose dad?” Audra asked stupidly.

“Ava's dad,” Beverly stressed, “Remember how I said it was Ben? Ben the architect who had to go home to get married? Well, I'm not quite sure that it was him, because there were... there were two other guys around the same time, and...” she snorted, hinting her friends what happened next.

“Beverly Marsh you shady lady!” Audra teased in pleased shock. Just when she thought she knew everything about her best friend.

“Why didn’t you tell us?!” Patty questioned frantically. The agony of being the only person who knows that Ava was fatherless in three different ways—how had Beverly coped for the past twenty years?

“Well, I never knew that I would ever, ever have to... I never imagined I’d see all three of them! Up in my old goathouse, a day before my daughter’s wedding!”

Patty and Audra looked at each other with wide grins, “*The old goathouse? PFFF!!!*”

Beverly wasn’t quick enough to stop the giggling women from running out of the restroom, heading directly towards the old goathouse where the mystery men were staying.

“Stan, dear, I’ll be right back!!” Patty yelled excitedly as he waved her off with his second cocktail. He was used to his wife’s wildness and he guessed she was in her natural habitat on this island.

“No! No, wait!” the mother protested, pushing herself off the sink and hurrying after them, “Shoot! Wait a minute! Don’t let them hear you!!!”

Patty and Audra hurried into the aged building, immediately pushing the ceiling door upwards—only to find the room empty.

“There’s no one here!” Patty complained.

“Are you sure, Bev?” Audra asked.

“Of course I’m sure!” she said, nudging in beside them as they glanced over the vacant room, “You think I would forget my daughter’s dads?”

Audra gave her a disbelieving look.

Beverly rolled her own eyes at herself, “They were all here—Bill Denbrough, Ben Hanscom, and Trashmouth.”

Both friends gasped in pleasure.

“Trashmouth?!” Audra repeated, fascinated.

“Shut up!” Beverly whined, dragging them back outside while scanning the scene frantically, “They must’ve gone back to their boat—I hope they run aground and drown!”

The friends followed after as Beverly grabbed the flower in her locks of hair stressfully, tossing it at the floor, infuriated with herself.

“But what are they doing here?! It’s like some hideous trick of fate!”

Startling them, a crowd of islanders and workers laughed loudly behind the three. But they stopped suddenly when Beverly looked at them. As they continued working, Beverly was left confused as she carried on inside the building where she slept.

Audra was staring at the workers when Patty approached her.

“It’s very Greek,” she told the taller woman.

Audra shook her head before the two followed after their lead singer.

“Do they know about Ava?” Patty asked as they climbed the stairs.

“What are they, psychic? No, I never told a soul!”

“Oh Bev, keeping it to yourself for all these years!” Audra said dramatically, like the actor she is, following them into her hotel room as Beverly hurriedly shut all the windows.

“It doesn’t matter about me! The only thing that matters is that Ava never finds out.”

“Well, maybe she would be cool with it!” Audra shrugged.

Beverly resisted throwing herself out the window.

“Cool with it!” she repeated, exasperatedly, “You don’t know my daughter. This would be like a bombshell to her!”

“Bev, they’ve gone!” Patty reminded her.

"I don't know that. I don't know where they are, I don't know why they're here, and I have brought this all on myself because I was a stupid, reckless little slut."

Patty and Audra whooped and cackled at that statement, looking at their friend with wide-eyes.

"Whoa!!! Don't you sound like your asshole father!" Audra exclaimed, hands on her hips.

If this had been twenty years ago, Beverly would've flinched even at the mention of Alvin Marsh—but she couldn't care less now. She had received the news that he died, five years ago, and she hoped he was now burning in hell from all the torture he made Beverly go through. She whipped around in denial, "I do not!!"

"Yes, you so do!"

"You do, it's Catholic guilt!" Patty teased, "You've been living like a nun!"

"Yeah, whatever happened to our Bev—life *and* soul of the party?" Audra threw a teal feather boa over Beverly's neck while Patty added a big show hat to her head and a pair of sunglasses, "El rock chick supremo!"

Beverly scowled at them behind the fancy sunglasses, "I grew up."

"Well then grow back down again!" Audra told her happily.

The girls threw Beverly's old catchphrase back at her. ***"Screw 'em if they can't take a joke!"***

Beverly turned around in fear when she felt that familiar tune spewing out of her bandmate's mouths.

You can dance, you can jive!

Having the time of your life

Ooo, see that girl, watch that scene

Digging the dancing queen

Audra threw a colorful skirt on before they both grabbed makeshift microphones, singing after Beverly as she scrambled to hide under the covers of the bed.

Friday night and the lights are low

Looking out for a place to go

Where they play the right music

Getting in the swing

“You come to look for a king,” Patty sang with a deep voice as she did an Elvis dance.

Anybody could be that guy

Night is young and the music's high

With a bit of rock music

Everything is fine

You're in the mood for a dance

And when you get the chance...

Just as Beverly couldn't resist Ben, Bill or Richie, she couldn't resist her favorite song of the Dynamos. She re-did her hanging overall strap and stood up on the bed, jumping as high as the mattress allowed while giggling childishly.

You are the dancing Queen

Young and sweet

Only seventeen

As Beverly fell on the mattress with a laugh, she recovered quickly as she joined in on the song.

Dancing Queen

Feel the beat from the tambourine, oh yeah

You can dance

You can jive

Having the time of your life

Ooh, see that girl

Watch that scene

Dig in the dancing Queen

All the men's problems faded away as Beverly remembered a fun time of her youth, when the Dynamos performed at every bar and every stage, sleeping all day and partying all night after the shows. There were no heartbreaks, no betrayals... just friends. Audra and Patty were loyal, expressive, always willing to go along with Beverly's wildness—while she regretted nothing about her and Ava's life, she did wish they could go back to being seventeen-year-old dancing queens sometimes. Patty and Audra danced outside with her, heading towards the ocean dock while approaching a table with men sitting down while their wives served them lunch as the song continued.

“You're a teaser, you turn 'em on...” Beverly sang as she wrapped her blue, feathered scarf around an old man, *“Leave 'em burning and then you're... gone!”*

As they left the table, every woman there followed after the trio, joining them in the song, heading to the docks without stopping this time.

Looking out for another

Anyone will do

You're in the mood for a dance

And when you get the chance...

Eddie was passing by, analyzing the list of guests when he started humming the familiar song happening right behind him. He didn't even bat an eyelash at the whole escapade that Beverly was doing with her friends and many, many women after them. He was used to it and Eddie was glad Beverly was feeling happy enough to sing—he hasn't heard her singing in a while. He carried on, wanting to have a quick, refreshing orange juice by the bar for a much-needed break.

You are the dancing Queen

Young and sweet

Only seventeen

Dancing Queen

Feel the beat from the tambourine, oh yeah!!

You can dance

You can jive

Having the time of your life

Ooh, see that girl

Watch that scene

Dig in the dancing Queeeeeeeeen!

Beverly shoved Patty into the water, laughing all the way before turning to Audra and doing the same thing, ruining her makeup job from earlier—she joined her friends moments later, launching herself into the sea without a care in the world. Of course, when the song ended, when the dancing Queens went to bed, Beverly would have to face this current disaster before Ava found out about it, would have to find out why her old lovers were haunting her, but until then... Well. It was nice to feel like a dancing Queen again.

With no women in sight, Eddie sat by the bar and asked Pepper to make him his usual freshly squeezed orange juice with two ice rocks. A man was sitting two stools away from him, smiling at he downed another cocktail.

“Pepper! Tell me, where can I birdwatch on this island?” the man, whose voice brought Eddie’s attention, asked.

Eddie seized him, and he decided that he liked this man. He was just his type. Tanned, taller and with curly hair. But could he be brave enough to even introduce himself? He has never seen this man around the island, so he probably was only here for the wedding—so what did Eddie have to lose?

As he was about to speak, the bartender interrupted.

“I hear that the south side of the island is better, is where there are fewer people.”

The man nodded, “Thank you, Pepper. I might take Patty there with me, tomorrow morning before the wedding.”

Pepper laughed, “Stan if you’re able to get your fincéé out of bed, in the morning, after tonight’s party then I will commend you, buddy.”

Eddie smiled sadly as he stared at his drink, feeling dumb. Of course, a man as handsome as this ‘Stan’ guy had to be taken. He sighed as he heard Stan walk away, probably to his room or to birdwatch—Eddie didn’t care anymore. The interest was gone.

And then, he jumped when suddenly a long arm emerged next to him. A hand slapped bills on the counter and a joyful voice alerted Pepper of another customer.

“Hey!! Good morning my man, mind if you give me a couple of beers?”

Sitting on the stool on his right, Eddie glanced at another tall man. This one, however, had a different energy from Stan. With his casual clothing, lazy smile and messy, curly dark-hair—Eddie found himself nervous when this man’s long—holy shit—legs touched his own as he spread them on his stool.

Sipping from his juice, Eddie tried to clear away the funny feeling inside his guts. But he could smell the ocean scent coming from his guy's hair, dude practically screamed 'adventure' as Pepper placed two beer bottles in front of him.

Who the fuck drinks alcohol before noon?

Oh.

Beverly did.

But that's not the point.

"Hey—you want some?"

Eddie blinked, "Uh?"

It was then the forty-year-old man realized he had been caught staring at the other for too long.

"You want a beer?" he repeated with an amused smile.

Quickly shaking his nervous feeling off, Eddie shook his head, "No, thank you. I don't drink," he politely declined, trying to ignore the warm feeling in his gut that this man brought just with a stare.

He stared at Eddie, before glancing at his orange juice, "Oh," he snorted as if he was surprised at it, "Oh shit, I should've guessed it."

"What? Guess what?" Eddie inquired, somehow offended.

The man smirked, resting his head on his hand while his arm was on the counter, "Nothing, nevermind. The name's Richie, can I have yours, cutie?"

Holy fucking shit.

Eddie decided that the way his heart was hammering right now wasn't normal. He couldn't be feeling like a teenager that just got flirted with the hottest guy in school—no, because he was an adult, with a grown son—he couldn't be seen blushing or stuttering just because a handsome man called him cutie.

“Uhm—My name is Eddie, not cutie,” he managed to retort, trying to sound flippant.

Richie’s smile spread even further. Not only he noticed the man’s cheeks reddening, but to his luck—he seemed to be into guys as well.

Could this day get any better?

Notes for the Chapter:

don't forget to leave a comment! they always make me smile :)

4. Voulez-vous?

Summary for the Chapter:

chaos
chaos and reddie

reeeeeeeee

Notes for the Chapter:

But the real question is... who is Ava's father? I know who. But I'm gonna leave some clues spread on the chapters! I already left some on the previous ones, but since I'm not really good with clues then you guys might already know lmao

"HEY!!!"

"Wait don't go!!!"

"Wait!!! Don't leave!"

Ava, Ali, and Lisa sprinted down the main dock of Kalokairi, where Richie had just sent off his boat with his passengers Ben and Bill. Ava and her friends had been following her mother around all afternoon, only to find out through a wedding guest's mouth that three men had set sail off the North coast.

It had taken twenty years for Ava's father to come back—she sure as hell was not going to let them escape so easily. Not when this could change her and Beverly's life forever.

They made it to the end of the dock, only for the sailboat to continue its journey outward, unable to hear the bride's protests. Ali and Lisa caught their breath and waited for Ava to flip ape shit from seeing her fathers leaving the island without so much as a goodbye wave.

Instead, she stripped her outer layers of clothing off, revealing a swimming suit underneath.

“Uhhh, Ava?” Ali questioned hurriedly.

“What are you doing!?” Lisa asked.

She responded by throwing her blouse into Ali’s face and diving into the water head-first.

“Ava!!”

The bride, of course, ignored her friends and determinedly swam all the way out to where Richie’s boat was now stopped.

“We’re gonna sail around the island—you wanna come?” Richie asked, thinking this kid was too much like her mother sometimes.

“You promised you’d come to my wedding!”

“Yes, well, your mother ejected us from the goathouse,” Ben explained, rubbing the back of his head.

“We thought we’d better get out of her hair,” Bill told her as he leaned down with the others.

The three of them held out their hands to help the young woman up when she finally reached it.

“Bev freaked out when he saw us,” Richie added, “What was that all about?” he asked, handing Ava a towel.

“No, she’s just not even thinking straight!” Ava covered-up while wiping her arms, “She’s so stressed about the wedding, you know, but she’s got no idea that you’re her lovely surprise! She’ll be so happy tomorrow!” *Yeah right! She’ll murder me with the wedding veil when she finds out!*

“You think so?” Ben chuckled fearfully.

Ava noticed an old instrument sitting behind Bill that was vaguely familiar from her early childhood.

“You took Mom’s guitar!” Ava pointed.

"Ah, no—I borrowed it," Bill replied casually, snatching the guitar up and sitting down. He pointed at two initials drawn on the back stem of the wood. "That's BM, Beverly Marsh, and... WD. William-Rocka."

"Rocka?" Ben and Richie echoed in confusion.

"I thought I had a funny nickname but buddy, you win," the curly-haired man added with a snort.

"I bought Beverly this. It cost me 10 quid, plus my Johnny Rotten t-shirt," Bill explained further, ignoring Richie's jab.

Richie nodded, impressed. Perhaps Bill and he had more in common than he thought—although the quipper preferred his bagpipes, he couldn't wait to hear Bill play on the guitar.

Bill looked up at Ava and gave as joking as an expression as he could, "Your mother knew quite a rebel."

Ben and Richie tried not to snicker, even though their own style had been embarrassingly dorky back in the nineties.

"I was studying in Paris when I met her," the writer explained as Ava sat down across from him. His fingers began plucking at the strings of the guitar, "I hopped on a train... followed her to Kalokairi," a soft smile inched out, "Quite spontaneously..."

Richie put the boat in movement again as they all listened to Bill's voice sing a nostalgic song, one he and Beverly once sang together before the collaboration of the Dynamos. They sang the first several chords in the yard of the Eiffel Tower, only hours after meeting each other.

I can still recall our last summer I still see it all

Walks along the Seine, laughing in the rain

Our last summer Memories that remain

We made our way along the river

And we sat down in the grass

By the Eiffel tower...

I was so happy we had met

It was the age of no regret

When the four stopped the boat along a large channel of rocks, Ben pulled out a couple of pads of paper and told Ava to sit down—he wanted to sketch the bride’s liveliness in case he never made it back to Kalokairi. He didn’t tell Ava that, however, and opted to give her a paper of her own, testing the young woman’s skill. Similar drawings of Beverly still sat in Ben’s drawer at his house back in Nebraska; Hannah asked about them once, but Ben could hardly explain without smiling and breaking into tears.

Oh yes...

Those crazy years, that was the time.

Of the flower-power

As the adventurer sang, Ava leaned over to get a better glimpse of the picture Richie was showing her—nineteen-year-old Beverly Marsh sat leaned against the young man, obviously stuck in the era of grunge, darker colored plaid flannel shirts, and ripped jeans, but looking completely happy and carefree in Richie’s tanned arms, holding her close. It looked as if the pair had spent a lovely day together, frolicking around the island and doing whatever they put their minds to. In a way, Ava almost envied her mother’s crazy adventures.

What would life be like, if Beverly had ended-up with one of these handsome men?

“By the way, Ava, you gotta tell me more about this Eddie guy,” Richie suddenly told her, with a wild grin that covered his shy demeanor.

Ava arched her eyebrow, and smirked in a way similar to Richie, “Oh?”

He nodded, confirming her suspicions about his interest while laughing.

But underneath we had a fear of flying

Of getting old, a fear of slowly dying

We took the chance

Like we were dancing our last dance

“Show me a picture of my mother!” Ava requested, scooting to his side, “You must have one, too, if Richie and Bill have one.”

Ben chuckled, handing Ava the photograph he protected with his life. He and Beverly (covered in grunge clothing) were cuddled in the rowboat together, hardly an inch of their body separated from each other. It was Ben’s favorite picture: before he ruined everything and tore their lives apart, he and Beverly were the happiest anyone could ever be. They wanted to live together, adventure together, get lost together, get into trouble together... While Ben didn’t regret his children, nor his relationship with Hannah, he couldn’t help but think he might be happier if he had stayed here like he promised Beverly.

I can still recall our last summer I still see it all

In the tourist jam, round the Notre Dame

Our last summer

Walking hand in hand

Paris restaurant

Our last summer

Morning croissants

Living for the day, worries far away

“Are you done?” Ben asked after a while, seeing that Ava had stopped moving the pencil. The bride-to-be only smiled and folded the drawing, tucking it inside Ben’s shirt pocket.

Our last summer

We could laugh and play

After hours of sailing the island, Richie (after teaching Ava how to stir a sailboat for a few minutes) steered them back to the first dock while Bill taught Ava a couple of strings on the guitar; the auburn-haired cutie used this information to finish the song they had been singing and humming all afternoon.

"And now you're working as a writer," she sang to Bill, who sighed, "The family man (Bill scoffed), the football fan (he scowled, shaking his head), and your name is William."

"How dull it seems..." Bill sang, sighing wistfully.

"Are you the hero of my dreams?" Ava thought while she continued the song in her mind.

"AVA!!"

A yell from the island caught her attention, and she turned to see Nick waving his arms wildly at the boat.

Ava jumped up immediately, handing Bill the guitar back as the others gathered to see what the fuss was about.

"I have to go—but please come tomorrow, okay?!" she begged, shooting a pleading puppy gaze at the men.

"Absolutely," Bill agreed, feeling strongly paternal towards the girl.

"We'll be there," Richie told her softly, already fond of Beverly's kid after spending an afternoon getting to know her.

"It's a promise," Ben nodded, and this time he was going to keep it. Either Beverly liked it or not, Ava was a good kid and getting to meet her and tell her his story with her mom has made Ben grow affectionate towards her.

"Thank you! See you then!" Ava launched herself into the water again, swimming to shore where her fiancé was eagerly waiting for her.

Ben took out the drawing from his shirt pocket, shocked to see a beautiful drawing of himself that resembled the one he had tucked away in his drawer at home, doodled by Beverly herself.

Ava had talent like this, and yet she was staying on the island forever? Ben couldn't believe it. Then again... Beverly had stayed on the island like she always planned, and hadn't she looked more glowing than ever?

Ben could only sigh as he watched Ava swim back to shore to the love of her life.

Back at the motel, a freshly showered Beverly was sitting at her mirror looking over the same three pictures she had with the men on the boat; she held each of them by the baby picture of Ava, trying to figure out if there were any outstanding features the bride took from her father. But just like years before, a day after Ava was born, Beverly saw nothing but a reflection of herself.

I can still recall our last summer I still see it all

Walks along the Seine, laughing in the rain

Our last summer

Memories that remain...

Beverly sighed and put the pictures down, "Memories that remain..."

"Nick!"

"Where have you been?" Nick asked worriedly as a soaking wet Ava came hurrying up the shore to him, "People have been arriving all afternoon, and when no one had seen you I got worried!"

"I'm sorry," the breathless bride smiled lightly, touching her fiancé's forearms as a light apology, "I was around the island, I just... I just lost track of time."

"Alright... as long as you're okay. You're not getting cold feet on me,

are you?” the brown-haired man teased, trying not to get too excited over how good Ava looked in her blue swimming suit. It wasn’t possible to make those weird, heavy articles of clothing look decent, was it? “I’ll see you in a little bit.”

“Where are you going?”

“It’s my stag do—my last night of freedom!” he announced out loud, giving her a grin.

Ava rolled her eyes as Nick laughed, taking her soft jaw between his hands and cradling it gently.

“Which is how some people might see it,” he teased, “But for me, it’s the last night before the greatest adventure of my life.”

The couple kissed quickly, Nick just happening to press his bare, thick chest against Ava, and aside from feeling subtly turned-on, she also felt increasingly guilty over keeping the big secret from her true love, the nicest person to set foot on Kalokairi. Maybe it would be okay to tell him, as long as he didn’t spill the beans to her mom—now was as good a time as ever, wasn’t it? A day before the wedding, hours before their bachelor and bachelorette parties?

Well, if she failed, at least Ava had a close supply of alcohol on hand.

Ava began, biting her lip somewhat nervously, “You know how I said I wanted to find my father?”

“Avie,” Nick sighed sympathetically, “We’ve been over this a million times—you don’t need a father you ou have a family!”

“And you’ll never leave me, right?” the auburn-haired asked, partially joking, partially serious.

“Are you kidding?!” Nick replied wildly, outraged by the mere thought, “Ava, you have turned my world upside down ever since I hit puberty!” The tan-skinned fiancé took a few steps back, puffing his chest out in pride and standing in a protective stance as he began singing to her.

I wasn't jealous before we met

Now every man that I see is a potential threat

And I'm possessive, it isn't nice

You've heard me saying that smoking was my only vice

“Hey!!” Ava complained when she tried to grab the fake cigar out of his hands.

But now it isn't true

Now everything is new

And all I've learned

Has overturned I beg of you...

She inched away from the kiss Nick tried to plant on her, pushing the taller away before shooting him a seductive glare and interrupting the song.

“Don't go wasting your emotion... Lay all your love on me,” she sang, begging him at the same time.

It was like shooting a sitting duck

A little small talk, a smile, and baby, I was stuck

The pair both sunk to their knees as their verses continued, Ava crawling towards Nick slowly, cutting the distance between them on the sand.

I still don't know what you've done with me

A grown-up woman should never fall so easily

I feel a kind of fear

When I don't have you near

Unsatisfied...

I skip my pride...

I beg you dear...

After a moment of teasing touching from his fiancé, pressed right up against him (while simultaneously requesting a form of satisfaction through song) Nick got a grip on himself and brushed Ava's wavy hair behind her ear, then held onto her shoulders and lowered her back into the sand for a long, sweet kiss, their duet echoing through the waves.

Don't go wasting your emotion

Lay all your love on me

Nick finally captured Ava in a breathtaking kiss, spinning her around in his strong arms before running off to his bachelor party, while Ava and Lisa collected their friend before the sunset so they could prepare. As she was pulled in the other direction, Ava called back to Nick while he jogged up the island in the direction of his bachelor party.

Don't go sharing your devotion

Lay all your love on me

"You better lay all your love on me tonight, Nick!!!" Ava yelled.

"Pervert!!" Nick yelled back, making the three of them laugh.

Beverly's daughter watched fondly as Nick's strong back disappeared behind the trees after giving one last wave to their group—even if Ben, Bill, and Richie didn't turn out to be any of her real fathers, it was comforting to know Ava always had her soon-to-be husband to lean on for support.

"LAYYYY ALL YOUR LOVE ONNNN ME!!!"

"W HOOO!!!"

"YEAH!"

Ava downed some fruity cocktail Pepper had made for them earlier

and tossed the glass aside, letting the herd of bachelorettes lift her into the air victoriously.

The party was on tonight, essentially the entire villa coming to celebrate the wedding with Ava and Nick, and even much of the employees were getting their freak on.

Even Eddie managed to sneak into their party by stay by the bar, making sure no one got hurt, but also to watch the show that was about to start. He was dressed more casual, with a white, unbuttoned shirt and swimming trunks that reached above his knees.

Eddie noticed a tall, curly-haired man approaching the bar and he was surprised at himself when he was disappointed that it was Stan—and not Richie.

Not much was exchanged between the two men after this afternoon, Richie flirted a lot and while Eddie tried not to stutter, the adventurer had to leave because he was hiding from someone. But he had winked and promised to find him later and Eddie was nervous about that promise—in a good way.

Stan hurriedly joined him, taking a seat next to the single father. After Patty told him she was going to perform tonight with her band as a surprise for Ava—he immediately wasted no time. He has always been curious to see his future wife performing.

The music came to a halting stop during the middle of the dancing, causing everyone to turn around and face where the only lights were shining—on the karaoke stage. Shimmering blue sheets were hanging in the stage doorway, three unidentified people waiting to go on behind it. The speakers were suddenly turned on, and Ava plopped down beside Lisa and Ali to see what the fuss was about. Audra's voice came through one of the microphones. "Ladies!!!! And no gentlemen—presenting! For one night, aaaand one night only—"

"Because that's all we've got breath for!" Patty shouted in the background.

"Speak for yourself, you old bat!" Audra cackled, trying to get back on course, "The world's first girl-powered band!"

Ava squealed in excitement.

“BEEEEEEV AND THE DYNAMOS!!!”

Beverly smiled as she and her bandmates stepped out onto the stage, wearing their old performance costumes full of blue silk, tiger stripes, wide ended pants, tight lace-up tops, pointed shoulder pads with long sleeves and pounds of blue and purple glittery makeup, just like old times. While the outfits squeezed the life out of her, it also squeezed a happier side of her out, a different Beverly from the one her daughter knew. She sincerely hoped Ava liked this version of her, too.

Stan whistled at the way Patty's suit tightened around her body as well, he was definitely going to ask her to keep it for sexual reasons.

Eddie smiled knowingly. He has never seen the Dynamos perform before coming to this island and when he did, their voices together always brought celebration and happiness.

The bachelorettes quieted down as Beverly and the Dynamos pointed to the sky with their left hand and began to sing.

“Super Trouper lights are gonna find me, but I won't feel blue... like I always dooooo... 'cause somewhere in the crowd there's youuu...”

The recorded music didn't play right away, so Beverly motioned for the old woman by the piano to turn it on. She pressed the button, and the crowd cheered as they were taken back to the era of the Dynamos.

I was sick and tired of everything

When I called you last night from Glasgow

All I do is eat and sleep and sing

Wishing every show was the last show (wishing every show was the last show)

So imagine I was glad to hear you're coming (glad to hear you're coming)

Suddenly I feel all right (And suddenly it's gonna be)

And it's gonna be so different

When I'm on the stage tonight...

Tonight the super trouper lights are gonna find me

Shining like the sun (sup-p-per trouper-p-per)

Smiling, having fun (sup-p-per trouper-p-per)

All the while these separate parties were going on, Ben, Bill, and Richie were wandering the island in search of something to do. Unaware that tonight was the night of the bachelor/bachelorette parties, they simply followed the lights and the music, allowing the tune to bring them wherever. As they walked silently up the cobblestone, to the left of where Ava and her girls were singing and dancing, a familiar song drifted into their ears; the lyrics put smiles on all their faces, and Ben just had to brag about how he was the inspiration for this particular song.

“Our song,” Ben pointed to the right, smiling with a bittersweet expression. He used to hum this all the time... he never did get to see the Dynamos perform it, though, because by that time he was gone, back in Hannah’s arms.

“Your song?” Richie repeated. He could hardly get an argument before Bill stepped in, settling the matter quickly.

“It’s my song.”

“What are you talking about?” Ben glanced back, frowning, “Bev wrote this for us!”

“No, she wrote this for us,” Richie stressed, pointing to his chest.

“No way!” Bill denied.

Feeling like a number one

Tonight the super trouper beams are gonna blind me

But I won't feel blue (sup-p-per trou-p-p-per)

Like I always do (sup-p-per trou-p-p-per)

'Cause somewhere in the crowd there's you

The arguing men all shut-up when they finished the series of steps, finding themselves in the midst of a live concert.

Ava and her gang were cheering and crowding the stage as Beverly, Patty, and Audra sang and danced around each other.

A grin split across Richie's lips when he noticed the ridiculous outfits that had once been the cat's meow—how he would tease Beverly when she spoke to her next. As Beverly was grinning and looking over the crowd, her eyes stopped on a trio of shocking faces that never ceased to interrupt her train of thought—Ben, Bill, and Richie were all here again, watching, nostalgic grins on their lips. It was enough to make Beverly sick, but she gritted her teeth and bore a smile, trying to get through the last verses Super Troupers.

So I'll be there when you arrive

The sight of you will prove to me I'm still alive

And when you take me in your arms

And hold me tight

I know it's gonna mean so much tonight!!!

The crowd cheered at Beverly's enthusiasm, and Ben grinned even more.

Tonight the super trouper lights are gonna find me

Shining like the sun (sup-p-per trou-p-p-per)

Smiling, having fun (sup-p-per trou-p-p-per)

Feeling like a number one

Tonight the super trouper beams are gonna blind me

But I won't feel blue (sup-p-per trou-p-per)

Like I always dooooo (sup-p-per trou-p-per)

'Cause somewhere in the crowd... there's youuuuu

(Super troper, lights are gonna find meeeee)

Beverly pointed at her daughter adoringly, making the other smile sweetly before everyone erupted into cheers at the final pose.

Eddie and Stan left the stools to clap and cheer standing up. Eddie with a huge grin, proud of his friend for making through the whole song with her forty-year-old lungs and Stan, finding himself even more attracted to Patty than ever.

Ben and the other two men whooped and hollered along with them, attracting attention from Ava, who went straight into action for fear of her mom's reaction.

"I can't believe you!" Ava cheered while embracing her mother tightly, overjoyed to hear that lovely singing voice again, "That was amazing!!!"

"Anything for you, Ava."

"Excuse meeeee!" Patty called with her microphone, pointing at Ben and the other X-chromosomes, "This is a hen party for the bride, women only! Thank you!"

Eddie and Stan had two excuses: one was gay and the other was engaged to one of the singers.

The party continued as the Dynamos escaped through the back door of the stage, struggling to walk in the uncomfortable outfits that seemed to fit a lot better twenty-years ago.

"Okay," Beverly huffed stressfully as they headed to their room, every step pounding with the heavy boots, "Why are they here then if it's not to ruin Ava's wedding?!"

'Gimme, Gimme, Gimme' started playing in the background as the

three walked.

“But I thought you were so keen on this wedding?” Audra asked, picking her wedgie painfully.

“I don’t want them spoiling it. They have no right to turn up like this—what have they ever done for their daughter?”

“Bev—Beverly, they didn’t know she existed,” Patty reminded her as they made it to the motel.

“Well they didn’t need to know, did they? I’ve done a great job with Ava all by myself, and I won’t be muscled out by an—*ejaculation!*”

And meanwhile, the attention that Patty brought on those three made Eddie realize that Richie was here. He suddenly felt queasy and he couldn’t believe he actually checked on his breath as the curly-haired man began approaching the bar, ignoring Patty’s warning. Bill was following him and Ben seemed to have walked off somewhere—Stan, however, took the opportunity to chase after his future wife, hoping to catch her alone.

Eddie tried to look casual as Richie approached, and the comedian seemed to have noticed the shorter man because he grinned wildly.

“Eds!! My love, I knew I’d find you here!”

“Don’t call me Eds!” Eddie complained instantly, but he didn’t look bothered at all.

They were standing close to each other down, and Eddie hated that he had to look up to face Richie. He didn’t even notice Bill awkwardly passing by them, hoping to have a decent drink by the bar.

“Sorry, but it’s adorable the way you complain about it. I can’t help it,” he told the single father, gently this time.

And Eddie could die right there, thinking that the intense gaze Richie was giving him—with his stupid, soulful dark eyes—had to be illegal. They met hours ago, for Christ’s sake!

Richie cleared his throat, grabbing Eddie's hand suddenly, "Do you—"

Is there a man out there?

Someone to hear my prayer??

The club music went on as the young singles of the island located Richie, Eddie, and Bill at a nearby bar—they hurried over and snatched the men before they could think of escaping, spilling Bill's drink as the innocents were tugged to a table and held captive by eager young bachelorettes.

Eddie seemed especially uncomfortable with the way the young women ran their hands over his broad chest and continued the song, not noticing that the fiancé of the hour had slipped away. Richie wanted a piece of Eddie's action—Eddie tried pulling him off, but Richie insisted he was "just his type."

Eddie was gonna die from embarrassment, tied up with a man that kept flirting with him—and who was now staring impressed at his abs—and with a stranger with blue-eyes that looked excited but terrified to be tied as well.

Gimme, gimme, gimme a man after midnight

Won't somebody help me

Chase the shadows away

Gimme, gimme, gimme a man after midnight

Take me through the darkness

To the break of the day

Ava, having witnessed the awkward glare Beverly sent the three unwelcomed men, snuck out of her party and followed Ben to one of the stone balconies a few motel blocks away; it just so happened to be right below Beverly's room, but Ava ignored that fact, for now, emerging into the darkly-lit balcony where Ben was casually leaning against the stones.

“Hi!” she greeted nervously.

“Hey—I think I should explain to Beverly that I come in peace.”

“Oh no, really, you should wait!” Ava insisted, lightly holding Ben back when he attempted to move past her, “You should wait until she’s got a few drinks in her first.”

“... Good idea.”

Ben turned his attention to Ava, looking her face over as if searching for something particular; there were certain features that were solely Beverly, and Ben couldn’t tell if maybe Ava’s nose seemed familiar? He was really beginning to wonder who this young woman’s father was. Surely he had to be here, or with the groom, scaring him into never leaving his daughter for someone else... though from what Ben saw, Ava’s fiancé was nothing short of loyal. Beverly probably frightened him enough when they first started dating, anyways. And they grew up together, right?

But still, Ben wondered. Who was the luckiest son of a gun in the entire world, to be allowed the honor of marrying Beverly and having a beautiful daughter with her? He had to have come around just after Ben since Ava was now twenty years old and ready to start her adventurous life with Nick.

“What you drew on the boat...” Ben began, unfolding the drawing from his pocket and showing it to Ava. The sharp details of Ben’s face were doodled on the paper effortlessly, “This is good. This is really good. Why don’t you pursue this? I think you have real talent.”

“I have enough to do here,” Ava shrugged, not close to blushing as his mother would have been. (Despite her disgusting amount of confidence, Beverly got embarrassed when Ben pointed out her greatest virtues).

“Is that really your dream? Running the villa with Beverly?”

“It’s just—she just can’t do it by herself!”

Ben nodded, refolding the drawing carefully and putting it back into his pocket thoughtfully; Ava observed the successful architect as he

leaned back against the balcony stones, looking over the motel dreamily. He seemed to be reflecting like she'd witnessed her mom doing so often. Reflecting on what, Ava was sure she knew.

"Did you know I drew this whole place up on the back of a menu one night?" Ben hummed with a sad smile, "Bev and I had it all planned out; I wanted to name the hotel for her, and I guess she stuck with that idea... I always dreamed I'd come back here."

"What kept you?" she asked him desperately.

Ben turned his gaze to Ava, lips going tighter. Puzzle pieces were starting to fit together. Would Beverly really have been so bitter over their break-up twenty years ago that she turned to the next man she saw and decided to have sex with him? Wouldn't they have met her husband if Beverly had one?

"What's your mother said about me?" He asked lowly.

"... She never mentioned you," Ava admitted nervously. Except for what was in the diary, of course. Ben stood.

His expression was serious, intending to get an answer straight from Ava herself.

"Ava—what am I doing here?"

A voice from the open window above startled the pair out of their conversation and Ava bolted back to her party before Ben could ask her any more questions.

"I need some air in here," Beverly sighed, opening her window more.

Ben hurried away, too deep in thought to fight with Beverly right now.

The Dynamos all plopped down on their leader's bed tiredly, exhausted from the performance. And they hadn't even been drinking yet! Beverly pointed at the ceiling, "Someone up there—has got it in for me. I bet it's my father."

"Oh, and wasn't he a ray of sunshine," Audra commented with wide-

eyes.

“That’s it. I’m gonna go get them out of here.”

“No no no—” Patty and Audra grabbed Beverly as she tried escaping, yanking her back onto the bed.

“You go in there guns loaded, there’s gonna be questions!” Audra advised, “Now help me out of these damn boots!”

Patty and Beverly stood, each grabbing onto one of Audra’s heeled boots and pulling as they talked.

“All that frickin yoga’s made my feet bigger,” the actor complained.

“Listen—what we’re gonna do is get them plastered,” Patty plotted, “And then, tomorrow, while I go bird-watching with Stan, Audra and Eddie will take them fishing!”

“Eddie?! Oh shit—Eddie doesn’t know!” Beverly gasped, horrified.

“Fishing?! And why are we involving Eddie in this?” Audra asked as her friends tried heaving the boots out of her feet.

“Well, what else do you suggest you do with three men?”

The boots came off all a sudden, sending Beverly and Patty to the floor as Audra’s feet dangled over the edge of the bed. She sat up with a huff, eyebrow-raising in remembrance.

“Well, *now* that takes me back.”

Ava made it back to her bachelorette party as soon as a wild-haired Bill escaped the clutches of the horny party-goers trying to get a piece of his body. He was stumbling out from underneath the drinks table when Ava came hurrying up to help him stand. As she did, her eyes widened when she saw Richie dancing with a now care-free looking Eddie in the middle of the floor—they seemed to be having fun. What the hell did she miss?!

“Hello!”

“Are you okay?”

“I’m fine,” he lied, rebuttoning his shirt.

The pair went over to the empty bar and sat down, Ava silently trying to regather control over the current situation. If Ben was growing conscious of the reason why she invited him, then it was only a matter of time before the others.

“Fancy Beverly having a grown-up daughter,” Bill commented thoughtfully after taking a sip of much-needed water.

“Do you have any children, Bill?” Ava asked.

“Well... I have the dogs, Lucy and Kipper—that’s the extent of my relationships,” he shrugged, “Although... I’d have loved a daughter. I’d have spoiled her rotten.”

Ava almost smiled at that, looking at Bill sympathetically. How little he knew about the actual reason why he was here.

“Um—is your father here?” the writer asked curiously.

“I don’t know,” Ava laughed pitifully. She gave the older man a serious look. “... I don’t know who my father is.”

Before Bill could ask any more questions, Ava was pulled away by Ali and Lisa, the music blaring once more as she was ushered onto the table for a dance with Richie and Eddie, the two already jamming and busting moves on the surface. Richie greeted Ava enthusiastically as Ava gave a weak smile, overwhelmed from jumping back and forth between potential fathers. Their personalities were just too different—at this point, Ava had absolutely no idea which one acted most like her. Curse herself for looking and acting just like her mother!

While they started talking, Eddie decided to give them some space by jumping out of the table to get a glass of water himself—he wasn’t used to dancing this much, but Nick was right! Apparently, Eddie liked dancing!

“I’ll be right back!” he told Richie before leaving.

“Hurry!” Richie giddily said, hoping to stick around Eddie for the rest of the night.

Now, he turned to Ava and gave her full attention.

Is there a man out there?

Someone to hear my prayer?

“Hey!” Richie cheered, shirt open and arms flailing, “This is fantastic! How on earth did Bev get money to buy this place?”

“She was left some money by the old man she looked after when I was little—the Eve that I’m named after,” Ava explained, shouting over the music.

“My great-aunt Eve?!”

“I guess!”

Richie slowed his dancing a bit, mind coming back to reality from the excitement and drinks.

“I always heard her money was left to family—”

Ava gave a pained jolt when Richie paused, stopping all dancing to lean forward, getting a better look at her as a crazy thought entered his mind.

“How old are you?” the taller man shouted.

“I’m twenty!”

A yelp escaped Richie’s throat. His head turned just as those lazy brown eyes widened with panic, knowing damn well that he and Beverly had... consummated their relationship twenty years ago, a little past the exact date.

The music became white noise behind his thoughts. Ava watched as he momentarily turned away, only to look back and hurriedly excuse himself.

“Will you—excuse me for a moment?” he stood still as panic took over his expression, “Sorry!”

None of the partiers noticed the disappearance of the bride again—but Eddie’s eyes followed after Richie as the man paced quickly away from the party—even when she pushed through all of them to chase after Richie, who was heading down towards the beach. He was huffing and puffing by the time the ocean current made him pause.

“Richie! Richie, wait!” Ava called, running after him, “Why did your great-aunt give my mother money?”

“I don’t know!”

“I don’t want any more secrecy, Richie—” Ava touched his arm, stopping him in his place.

“What do you want from me?!” he didn’t mean to yell, but the panic was too much when he slowly realized what his relationship towards Ava could mean.

“Richie, *please!*” The tanned man turned around, breath jumping as he looked deeply into Ava’s blue eyes that resembled Beverly’s so much. It all matched-up. But Richie couldn’t believe it...

Had Beverly really never told him? Why would she never mention that his great-aunt gave her money after her passing? It wasn’t possible. Right?

“Are you my father?” Ava asked once and for all.

“Yes,” Richie exhaled shakily, “... I think so.”

The auburn-haired woman was frozen for a moment, but soon her lips split into a bright smile.

Twenty years. It had taken her twenty years to find her father. It had taken a wedding invitation and a night of dancing and questions to expose these secrets.

“You know what comes next,” Ava laughed breathlessly, stepping towards Richie.

“Oh, you’re not going to tell me you have a twin sister, are you?”
Richie quipped worriedly.

“Will you give me away tomorrow?”

“Give you away?”

“Our secret until the wedding!” Ava pleaded.

Richie sighed stressfully. It’s not like he could reject his daughter seconds after discovering he had a daughter in the first place! Richie was a sucker! He fell for Beverly every time he looked at her, and looking at her—*their* daughter now was no different. Ava was already wrapped around his finger. Richie stood there in a total daze, memories of that night flooding back while Ava looked at him with puppy eyes, so full of hope and relief.

“Oh, God... okay.” the sailor sighed again, “Okay, fine. I’ll... I’ll give you away, Ava.”

“Really?!” she laughed lightly.

“Yes. I may be a lone wolf, but I’m not above making my daughter happy.”

With slight awkwardness, the tall man stepped forward, putting his arms around Ava and hugging her closely. Ava hugged him in return, wanting to cry from joy; this was what she had been missing since being born. A father. Granted, Beverly acted as both a mother and father to her but having a real manly figure in her life aside from Eddie.

“Oh! Eddie! You need to go back to him!” Ava told him quickly.

Richie seemed to have realized what he left that party as well, “Oh shit—Eds, you’re right!”

Ava lightly separated from Richie, who gave her a shocked (but very pleased) smile and motioned for her to go.

“Thank you! Thank you so much, Richie!”

“That’s Dad to you, darling.”

Ava giggled uncontrollably and ran off in the other direction, elated and ready to get back to her party.

Richie remained where he was standing, unable to move or do anything aside from thinking—once his daughter was gone, he could see his memories a lot more clearly. He and Beverly, the beach, the sailing, their cliff adventures, their special night in the lower deck of the boat... to think that had been the moment Richie became a father. Twenty years and he hadn’t been aware of this wonderful fact! He could’ve sworn they used protection... probably.

Yeah. They most definitely did, but these things weren’t full-proof.

But why wouldn’t Beverly tell me?

“I didn’t mean to eavesdrop—but I can’t believe in what I just heard,” Eddie Kaspbrak’s figure emerged from the shadows between two large rocks, and Richie snorted mirthfully.

“Eddie! What a night, uh?” Richie wasn’t upset, hell, he was glad someone besides him knew about this. If he had to carry on with this secret by himself until tomorrow, he’d burst—and not in the way he was hoping for tonight.

Eddie however, seemed anxious as he approached him, “You know this changes everything, right?”

At that, Richie frowned, “What do you mean?”

“You know Nick?”

“Yup, the lucky sonofabitch I now gotta give a ‘scary father’ talk to that is gonna marry Ava, what ab—”

“Nick is my son, Richie.”

“Oh.”

Fuck. Now it was Richie’s turn to look anxious. First, he finds out he has a daughter and then, the cute guy that he was actually starting to

like has a son?! What the hell was happening? Was this some kind of sick joke from the universe, punishing him for leaving Beverly on this island, alone and pregnant with his baby?

“Fuck! Okay—no, *wait*,” he paused, stepping closer to Eddie to grab him gently by the shoulders, “This doesn’t mean shit, Eddie! I—You, I mean, *shit*—we! *We* have something going on between us! And excuse my potty mouth but, I think I’m starting to really like you, man!” he felt a reassuring feeling when Eddie gave him a small smile, “Eddie, all my life I’ve been scared of... more! Ya know? All that bullshit like, living together or thinking about marriage or even adopting a dog together! It all scared me shitless, because... because I don’t feel like I deserve it. But you, man, you make me feel *more* all the time—I can’t describe it! I mean for fuck’s sake, don’t tell me you can’t feel it? *Please*, Eds, don’t tell me this changes everything. Because even when I just found out that Ava is my kid—my feelings for you haven’t changed a bit.”

Eddie sometimes missed his inhaler, even though he knew he didn’t have asthma, “Richie... I... I do feel something. But, I’m scared too. After my divorce, after realizing my repressed sexuality—I’ve never been with someone that made me feel so... so *fucking* crazy! All I can think about is Nick and the wedding and I always distracted myself with raising my son, I never... I’ve never lo-liked someone before, not even my ex-wife,” Eddie told him distastefully, “But I get it... I feel it too. Whatever is growing between us, you’re right. We could... explore it. After all, everyone will only find out about your parental status after the wedding, as Ava said so... maybe...”

“Yeah?” Richie was buzzing with eagerness, staring at Eddie intently.

“Maybe... I could pretend to be shocked, like everyone else?” the housekeeping manager suggested, smiling slyly.

Consequences be damned! Eddie was forty years old and Beverly was right, Nick could handle his dad dating again.

Hopefully.

Richie was really hot so maybe Eddie was thinking with his dick.

Pulling Eddie closer to him, Richie kissed his forehead before the two laughed and headed back to the party, feeling giddy and rebellious.

But Eddie almost wanted to laugh, he couldn't wait to see Beverly's reaction.

Now what?

Ava laughed to herself, trying to recover as she made her way back to the mainland of the hotel.

I found my father. I found him after so long! Who do I tell?! Should I tell Nick?! Should I surprise everyone like I said? Mom will kill me, but it'll all be worth it in the end.

Right?

Despite confirming that Richie was, in fact, Ava's father, she had this uncertain feeling about the new situation. She was given no time to think about it, however, because upon returning to her party, it turned out that the bachelors from Nick's party had invaded their territory.

A new song was blaring over the speakers, adding to the mystery of the mask-wearing men who were each grabbing an eligible person and pulling them into a dance.

Bill seemed to be surprised at the sudden appearance of the masked men, but as he walked to see them closer, he bumped against someone—a beautiful redhead woman, that had been laughing before they bumped into each other.

His eyes widened, she looked so pretty mid-laughter that Bill remained frozen on the spot.

Audra however, arched her eyebrow as she recognized him as one of Beverly's flames—surely, Bev wouldn't mind her dancing with him a little, right?

After all, he was adorable.

She pushed him to the dance floor, and Bill yelped when he almost let his beer bottle fall.

People everywhere

A sense of expectation hanging in the air

Giving out a spark

Across the room, your eyes are glowing in the dark

And here we go again, we know the start, we know the end

Masters of the scene

We've done it all before and now we're back to get some more

You know what I mean

Eddie looked around with an awed expression at what Richie and he walked into, so this is what his son had planned?! Seeing him and his friends descending from the roofs with rope almost gave him a heart attack, but he decided to stay back.

Nick slid his mask off, confused when he didn't see his fiancé at first—Ava emerged with a shocked expression, but a loving smile when her man noticed her presence.

“Nick! What's going on?”

Nick responded by pulling out a necklace he made and tying it around Ava's neck; Ava cooed at it and sweetly kissed his cheek before accepting the hand and letting herself be pulled into a dance. But it wasn't long before her attention was occupied elsewhere.

Voulez-vous (ah-ha)

Take it now or leave it (ah-ha)

Now is all we get (ah-ha)

Nothing promised, no regrets

Voulez-vous (ah-ha)

Ain't no big decision (ah-ha)

You know what to do (ah-ha)

La question c'est voulez-vous

Voulez-vous

Beverly, with Patty holding Stan's hands while the two shared a secretive smirk, had returned to the scene, all dressed up and ready to impress whoever wanted to watch.

And who else just happened to be walking in himself, Ben Hanscom, only a few feet away from Beverly.

Audra had left the two to have fun, and by the looks of it and to Beverly's surprise, was dancing with a now mildly drunk Bill Denbrough who was under the seductive spell that she had cast.

Patty and Stan quickly got lost in the crowd, leaving Beverly alone, totally eligible for a conversation or even a dance.

Terrified that Ben might take that chance and bring-up the wedding invite, Ava brushed Nick aside to go intervene.

"Go dance with mom!" she hurriedly asked him.

Ava became lost in the hot crowd of dancers, suddenly being pulled aside by Ben, whose handsome hazel eyes were suspiciously wide with hope.

"Ava, come here!"

His grip was almost protective on Ava as they shuffled out of the dance circle, talking loudly over the music.

"I know why I'm here now," Ben said excitedly, heart pounding with utter shock and happiness he knew from his relationship with Beverly, "Why didn't Bev tell me?! How long... have you know I'm your father?"

“What?!” Ava nearly screamed, laughing in panic, “Not long at all!”

Ben smiled a sickeningly kind smile, hands giving her wrists a fatherly squeeze.

“Hey Ben, listen to me, my mom doesn’t know that I know. So can we wait until after my wedding?”

“Who’s giving you away tomorrow?”

“Nobody,” she lied, not knowing the reason for it and regretting it instantly.

“Wrong—I am!” Ben said proudly, “Our secret ‘till then!”

The architect had been thinking heavily over the past half-hour. He reflected on every inch of his relationship with Beverly, the exact date of their night of intimacy, the bitter reasons behind her keeping this secret (granted, Ben knew he ended things horribly, breaking Beverly’s heart in the process) and came to the conclusion that Ava was indeed their daughter. Of course, Beverly wouldn’t want to tell him! She thought Ben was happily married! Even if that wasn’t so, Ben had broken her heart by being engaged to Hannah. It was the ultimate betrayal, one Ben regretted every single day.

But now was the time to start making up for that lost time. And in the process, Ben planned on mending both relationships.

Voulez-vous (ah-ha)

Take it now or leave it (ah-ha)

Now is all we get (ah-ha)

Nothing promised, no regrets

Ava was suddenly jerked back into the dance, Nick giving her a concerned look as they slid through other couples, not noticing Richie and Eddie making out beside the bar.

“Are you okay??” Nick asked carefully as he cupped her face.

“I can’t breathe!!” Ava told him anxiously.

Voulez-vous (ah-ha)

Ain't no big decision (ah-ha)

You know what to do (ah-ha)

La question c'est voulez-vous

Noticing her daughter’s distress, Beverly stopped dancing and made her way towards her, but then she caught eyes with Ben on her right side and immediately danced in the other direction, letting two young islanders dip her seductively. Not that she was bitter or anything.

Ava’s head was starting to become fuzzy as she turned once more, accidentally coming face to face with a sweaty and pumped-up Bill, full of more energy the young bride had ever thought possible—probably Audra’s energy rubbing on him, she was dancing nearby, giving them space.

His shirt was unbuttoned again, but the most alarming part was when he flung off the mask Audra gave him and stared at Ava with huge eyes.

“Oh my god!” he exclaimed.

No no no no!

“I’m your father!”

“Bill!!” Ava squealed in alarm.

“Now that’s why you sent me the invite—you wanted your old dad to walk you down the aisle,” Bill explained enthusiastically, “Well I won’t let you down!! I’ll be there!!!”

And then, he returned to the dance floor, where Audra was waiting for him, grinning wildly as he placed his hand on her waist to bring her closer.

Richie and Eddie seemed to have stopped kissing each other as well, she saw them circle each other on the dance floor with giddy expressions and red cheeks—and was Eddie carrying a cocktail in his hand?? Ava thought he didn't drink!

Voulez-vous (ah-ha)

Take it now or leave it (ah-ha)

Now is all we get (ah-ha)

Nothing promised, no regrets

Voulez-vous (ah-ha)

Ain't no big decision (ah-ha)

You know what to do (ah-ha)

La question c'est voulez-vous

Voulez-vous

The dancers joined hands around Ava, shuffling in circles as the music came to a high point, familiar faces amongst them: Ben, her mother, Nick, Eddie, Richie, even Patty and Stan, Bill and Audra, who he was sending heart-eyes at.

... all the workers

...her fathers... her friends... her family... the entire day began to echo loudly.

"You have turned my world upside down."

"How old are you?!"

"Fancy Beverly having a grown-up daughter."

"Oh my god! I'm your father!"

"Who's giving you away?"

5. It's Only Natural For Children to Leave

Summary for the Chapter:

reddie behaving like teens

beverly loves her daughter

eddie loves his son

fuck myra

Notes for the Chapter:

ayyy only one more chapter until the end!

but I might write an epilogue!

The next day

7:30 AM

11 hours until the wedding

“Come on mother, rise and shine!”

Audra groaned loudly as Patty, ever so bright and early, pushed her shoulder and opened the windows, allowing the early island sunlight to leak inside. She was about to leave with Stan to go birdwatching, and even though it wasn't ideal for her—after the night they had together of “jumping on the bed”, she felt complied with rewarding her future husband.

Beverly came rushing in (wearing her bathrobe from their college days) not a moment later, frantically laying on the bed beside Audra and immediately releasing her feelings about the night that ended only hours before.

“I was tossing and turning all night!” Beverly complained weakly, dark circles beneath her energetic eyes, “Those three guys are still loose on this island! We've got to do something.”

“Bev... Bev, Bev–BEVERLY!” Patty halted her, grabbing onto her shoulders, “It’s all under control!”

A few doors down, Ava was plowing into the room of her friends, where Lisa was badly hungover on the bed as Ali offered her a glass of water, to which she sleepily refused.

“I have been tossing and turning all night,” Ava said, voice shaking from fear and a slightly delusional feeling, “I’ve got three dads coming to my wedding and I have to tell two of them they’re surplus, only which two?”

“It’s all under control,” Ali assured her.

Ava moaned in disagreement.

Patty tried explaining her plan to Beverly, whose mind was occupied with Richie’s boat, where Ben and the other men had decided to stay for the night, via words from Audra, who witnessed Richie and Eddie heading to the docks together. So, even though Eddie didn’t know about their plan, he could still tell them what Richie’s intentions are on this island. And since he was already on the boat, all Audra had to do was catch Bill alone and interrogate him as well.

And since Patty witnessed them getting along just fine during the party, she knew that it would go well.

All Beverly could think was what was Richie thinking about? Did he have a one-night stand last night? Did Eddie even have a drink for that to happen? Last Beverly remembered, Eddie never needed a drink to have a good time. He used to tell Beverly all he needed was some music and the presence of his family.

“Audra is taking Bill fishing,” Patty said, trying not to imagine Audra actually holding a fish in her hands, “She’ll hop on their boat, slyly gather information with her British charm, come right back and tell you why she thinks they’re all here.”

Ali continued her optimistic speech to Ava, who was distantly listening.

“We’re each gonna go off, we’re gonna grab a man, interrogate him, swap notes and decide!”

“And after fishing, Audra has talked Bill into water sports!” Patty partially lied, to which Audra moaned in agony, finally lifting her head up; the eye mask was crooked on her makeup smeared face, prompting Patty to make a noise of disgust and alarm.

Audra suddenly remembered a particular blue-eyed man from last night...were they dancing together? Wait, wait...no—they danced in an alley together? But... Audra thought they kissed or something... but it was so dark and didn’t Patty end up knocking on the door and shoing Bill out or something? She knew he slept here, but...

Did they, dot dot dot?

“Oh god—nurse! Donkey testicles, quickly!” Patty yelped when she saw Audra’s face.

Eddie saw Richie on one of the clearest images of last night and groaned again, shoving his head into the nearest pillow.

Wait.

Why was his room swaying?

And this wasn’t how his pillow smelled like.

He sat quickly on the bed, regretting it later when he felt a sharp pain stinging on his head—this is why he stopped drinking—and to add fuel to his anxious state, he was completely naked.

And his ass hurt a little.

“Shit!” he cursed, shocked at himself as he looked around with mild panic.

Back at Richie's boat, Ben was already off wandering the island, Bill was watching the sunrise and Richie himself had just gotten out of the shower, a towel wrapped around his waist lazily.

The party last night had been great, but he hadn't slept a wink on account of Ava's big news. It was strange, waking-up as a father at such an old age; Richie wasn't sure how to feel about these emotions. The shower hadn't helped. He was stuck staring at his own reflection in his small bathroom when he heard Eddie let out a curse.

Grinning sheepishly, he headed out of the cubicle into his room, where Eddie was sitting on his bed, abs showing and messy hair from sex. The two stared at each other and Richie watched as Eddie visibly relaxed when he realized he was in Richie's boat.

"Did we?"

"Yup," Richie nodded.

"Do you remember anything?"

"Nope—well, some parts. You're very sensitive and loud—"

"Shut the fuck up!" Eddie groaned as he covered his face, hiding his embarrassment.

"No, no! It turned me on, seriously!" Richie laughed, taking a seat on the bed.

Eddie glared at him with his big, brown eyes and Richie smiled even more.

"Did we use protection?"

Richie simply nodded at the unwrapped condom package by the small nightstand next to Eddie's side of the bed, and he smirked when Eddie gasped and reached for a small bottle of lube that was still open from last night.

"Jesus Christ!" the shorter man exclaimed, "We really—holy *shit*!!"

Richie leaned further to plant a kiss on Eddie's hair, "You can use the

shower if you want. And breakfast is getting prepared, so hurry Eds—I wanna feed you, and then I wanna take you for a walk around the island,” the adventurer winked.

But his smug expression dropped when Eddie tossed the lube bottle into the bed and cupped his face, pressing his lips on Richie’s.

Richie was stunned at first, but he happily kissed the man back. It was a gentle peck, but Richie loved every single part of it.

When Eddie broke the kiss, he frowned at quipper and brushed his finger gently on his jaw, “I want freshly squeezed orange juice.”

Richie chuckled, rubbing his nose with the other, “Anything else?”

“Yes, another kiss.”

While Eddie showered, Richie happily cooked breakfast enough to serve the two and Bill. He was glad to have at least two oranges in his boat, and he didn’t mind going through the process of squeezing the juices out of them into a cup. He also made fried eggs, bacon, toast and suddenly was in the mood to make pancakes as well—it seems that after three months of not getting laid, Eddie Kaspbrak had given life back to his body.

Richie now wanted to write jokes. Or explore the island.

He was just about to sit down when Bill came down into the sleeping and cooking quarters—the expression on his face was as determined as Richie had ever seen, returning the awkward, intense stare until they both went to talk, stopping when they saw the other’s lips move.

“No, after you,” the sailor said.

“No no, go ahead.”

“No no no, you first—”

Bill bounced silently excited as he bounced a foot on the carpet nervously, wondering how this conversation needed to be started.

Only one person knew Bill's secret (or so he thought)—two if you counted Patty, who guessed right only because she had been watching Bill all night (not that she was the island stalker or anything). While Bill wasn't sure his heart possessed the courage needed to reveal this recent information, Richie wasn't all that intimidating right now, mostly because he knew Bill was going to talk about last night when Richie saw he and Audra together at the beach, not exactly being careful adults.

No matter how hard he tried erasing that memory, it wouldn't go away.

"I want to get something off my chest," Richie admitted.

"Me too."

The men sat down across from each other, leaning over the table to whisper; Bill began first, avoiding saying the names of Ava and Nick, even though Richie already knew that he was Ava's father.

"Last night... I discovered something wonderful," the sailor said lowly, "It was a wake-up call, a way to look at myself and what I really want out of life."

While the confused possible fathers were having this deep conversation, Eddie got off the shower and started to get dressed while he eavesdropped. It wasn't like he didn't want to—they were right outside of the door!

Bill chuckled in disbelief at Richie's statement.

"Last night?" the image of Richie later table-dancing with Eddie drifted back, "You didn't know? You didn't even suspect that you were...?"

"Into dudes? No, man! I know I'm bisexual—but I've never felt this way before towards someone... well, except for Bev, of course," Richie assured him. He didn't have those feelings for Beverly anymore though—Richie knew he belonged to someone else now.

"Ah. Beverly's friend—Eddie, right? And now we... say it out loud,"

Bill suggested, nudging the other's arm.

"No! I don't think he wants anyone to know, because of Nick. I guess we have to keep it a secret... for now," Richie quickly said, thinking about the dilemma Eddie had last night.

Well, I'm pretty sure every sober person at the party saw Eddie grinding on you, Bill thought with a raised eyebrow. *Not the best-kept secret, if I say so.*

"All might be revealed tonight."

Eddie bit his lower-lip at Richie's suggestion as he buttoned up his shirt.

"Talk of revelations..." Richie lowered his head, "Last night..."

Richie had been sober for enough of the night that he remembered Audra dancing quite seductively with Bill. He tried hiding his smirk as Bill tried explaining.

"You and that girl?" Richie finished, "...I think I know what's going on."

"No you don't—" Bill laughed, "You don't," there was no way Richie knew Ava was his daughter. Bill didn't tell anyone, did Ava?

"It's obvious. I saw it from the moment you clapped eyes on each other."

"You're kidding."

Bill wouldn't deny that Richie was observant. He and Ava had some sort of wild similarity in personality that was clear from the second they met.

"I'm gonna level with you, Richie—I don't think I can do this," the writer admitted with a sigh, "I mean, she's a wonderful girl, but can I take her on in my life?"

"Big Bill—where's your spontaneity?"

Joining (stepping on, as Beverly would describe) this little celebration by Ava's side on the most important day of his daughter's life was a serious commitment. Maybe agreeing had been a mistake. Maybe he wasn't ready for something this... this...

"It's this... this family, you know?" Bill tried to explain.

"Well, you don't have to marry her!"

Bill whipped his eyes over to Richie, not knowing what the hell he was talking about. Him, marry Ava?! Was Trashmouth still drunk off his ass?

"What?!"

Having heard enough—and tried not to laugh—Eddie finally opened the door and decided to step in on the conversation then, smiling politely at Bill and Richie popped out of his seat happily, leaving Bill at the table scratching his head over the conversation they just had.

"Hey! Right in time for breakfast!" Richie announced as he pecked his lips, "We're serving up the works here!"

The tanned sailor turned around and headed to the kitchen, revealing to Eddie (and an unwilling Bill) his naked butt, the towel only having one full side to it.

Eddie's mouth trembled with shock as his cheeks blushed deeply, "T-Think you just did!"

"Sunny side up, lox or ham?"

The shorter man struggled in his turn, eyes flickering from the floor to Richie's toned and tanned butt cheeks; his reply became incoherent mumbles under his breath.

"I'll j-just—I'm just... gonna... ugh." *Nothing I haven't seen before... but DAMN.*

He joined Bill at the table and gave him an awkward good morning as Bill nodded his head with a tight smile.

Mike Hanlon smiled brightly at the new, glorious day that came upon Kalokairi.

A good day to marry a young couple.

Mike was a celebrant, and he was here because Beverly Marsh remembered him from their college days—and no, he didn't have an amorous relationship with the vibrant woman, but the two treated each other closer than friends would. And even though they would often e-mail or talk through Facebook each other (since Mike lived in Florida and international calls were too expensive for his lifestyle).

But a month ago, he received an invitation from Beverly to come to her daughter's wedding and officialize it as well.

He was honored and accepted it giddily.

Not only he got to meet her daughter, but he got to marry a young couple and celebrate their love.

Holding on to his duffel bag, Mike stepped out of the boat of the friendly fisherman that gave him a ride to the island in exchange for money that Mike wouldn't miss and headed up the island, where he hoped to find Beverly and a nice shower waiting for him.

"What a mess," Beverly whined, helping the other employees pick-up the garbage from last night's shindig in the courtyard, "I can only imagine what the mess after tonight will be like..."

Ava was casually dressed and not even remotely close to being ready for her wedding day; she really didn't want to get into it with her mom, so she tried skitting across the courtyard without being seen, managing to get pretty far before Beverly's watchful eyes noticed her.

Everyone was already worried about Ava after last night's fainting incident (especially Nick, poor soul), and Ava really really really didn't want her guilt to increase any more than it already was upon seeing Beverly's concerned motherly expression.

"Hey!" Beverly called out to her daughter, making her turn abruptly

in what was meant to be a casual attempt.

“Hm, what?” Ava hummed tensely.

The Dynamo lead singer dropped her garbage bag and slowly walked over to her daughter; those studious, attentive blue-hued eyes took in Ava’s appearance. The tenseness was obvious, and those childish aqua eyes were darker than usual, possibly because of bride stress.

“You okay?”

“Yeah!” Ava stressed, going to turn away and continue her walk to wherever the quietest part of the island was, “I’m fine, I’m fine—”

Beverly lightly grabbed her daughter’s arm, tugging her back into the conversation. The obvious reluctance in Ava’s fatigued face let her mother know just what she was thinking.

Or so Beverly thought.

“Ava...”

“What?”

“Last night, you and Nick... what’s wrong?” Beverly asked gently, tenderly, still watching Ava’s expression, “Tell me. Tell me what’s wrong.”

Damnit! Ava cursed internally, eyes immediately tearing-up and flickering to every direction in hopes of avoiding her mother’s caring gaze. *I can’t keep secrets!!! It’s too horrible! How could I be so stupid?!!!*

“I-I don’t know what to do!” Ava whimpered weakly, swallowing her fear.

“You don’t know what to do,” Beverly repeated calmly. That sounded like something Ben once said to her so many years ago. Like a good mother, Beverly embraced her daughter with extreme comfort, trying to ease the pain in Ava’s chest, “You don’t have to do anything. It’s not too late. I can still call-off the wedding, everybody will understand—”

Ava backed out of the hug in a hurry, tears no longer daring to fall as Beverly's words sunk in, creating panic inside his head.

"Call—call off the wedding?" Ava repeated crazily.

"Isn't that what you want?"

"No!!!" she cried loudly, "No, that's what *you* want!"

"No!" Beverly protested in shock, eyes going wide.

"Yes! God!"

"Ava!"

"You just—ugh! You have no idea!!!" Ava ranted, grabbing at her hair angrily, "You never had a wedding, you never did the marriage and babies thing you just did the baby thing, well good for you!"

"You know, I don't know why you're going off on me now!" her mother shouted back, stepping away, "I really don't!"

"Because I—God, I love Nick, and I want to be with him!"

"Good! Great!"

Ava started backing away, but she wasn't done with the argument.

"And I don't want my children growing up not knowing who their father is because it's just—it's crap!!!"

Beverly's mouth was still dropped open when Ava was long gone, the other employees doing their best to ignore what they just saw.

A month's worth of gossip had come from that conversation, but no one dared mess with Beverly today, averting their eyes and ears as she angrily continued picking garbage up; before her bitterness and irritation could fully set in, Nick, Pepper and the rest of his groomsmen came up the stairs, laughing as Pepper tried playing the bagpipes they found in the old goat house.

The mere reminder of those ugly old things triggered Beverly into a

tearful whirlwind of hatred for no one but herself. She lashed out when Nick and the other giggling men got close enough, shoving the garbage bag in their direction.

“Okay okay, Ava’s gonna have an absolutely beautiful wedding, right?!” Beverly questioned, “You’re supposed to be helping me, you guys—he’s gotta get ready! Go, go, hurry!!!”

“Are you okay, Beverly?” Nick asked carefully as Pepper hid behind him, surrendering the bagpipes out of fear.

“I’m—I’m fine, don’t worry, just—just go... get everything perfect, okay?” Beverly sniffled.

“Of course,” Ava’s fiancé smiled gently. His warm hand gently touched her arm reassuringly, “Don’t worry about a thing. I’ll make sure the wedding is perfect for Ava.”

Damn my daughter’s better taste. She sure knows how to pick them.

“Thank you,” Beverly sighed again, pulling Nick in for a quick hug, “You’re the best son-in-law ever. Now go get ready for your big day.”

“Sure thing!”

“Oh wait—have you seen your father?” Beverly asked quickly.

Nick shook his head with a knowing smile before he and the boys scurried off together; in a hurry to escape the stares of her employees.

Beverly snatched the obnoxious instrument and jogged over to the old goat house where all the other unsatisfying objects were stored (men included). All the while, she thought of the argument Ava and she had. Sure, as mother and daughter they had a few petty disagreements here and there, but... this was a more serious subject to be arguing about.

It made Beverly sick.

Ava’s father had never been a crucial subject between them—Beverly guessed it was only natural for this to happen on the day Ava was

getting married. Bad luck was a reoccurring factor in her life, today was no exception.

And it just kept getting better.

As Beverly was leaving the goathouse, shutting the door behind her, a voice spoke to her.

“I didn’t know you were into bagpipes.”

Beverly tried not to pause at Ben’s comment, but her steps faltered once before she came up with a petty remark.

“They’re supposed to ward off unwanted visitors.”

“Well, you don’t need bagpipes to do that.”

Burn.

Beverly snatched up some kind of glue gun meant to fix the crack in the courtyard before shooting a glare at Ben, who strolled over to her as the single mother kneeled down, adjusting the gun as a distraction.

“What are you doing here, Ben?” Beverly asked bitterly.

“This is our dream, remember?” Ben reminded the lead singer, hazel eyes casting over the island, “Villa on the island?”

“Yeah, well, this is my reality,” Beverly sighed, “Hard work and a crippling mortgage—shoot!”

The glue gun tip broke off as she tried pressing it against the crack, prompting Ben to reach out, per his architectural instincts.

“And a hotel that’s crumbling around me.”

“Look, I’ll help—let me have a look at this—”

Beverly nudged his hand away with more harshness than she meant to.

“No, that’s alright, I can deal... with my own disasters.”

Reluctantly, Ben backed off, annoyed at his ex's stubborn attitude. Of course, he wouldn't want to change Beverly for the world, but it was just so... BEVERLY to not change over the years. It made him love the stubborn woman even more. Where was the science behind that?

"Why didn't you tell me it was Ava getting married?"

"Well... I didn't think it was any of your business."

"Why is she getting married, settling down on the island?" Ben asked, fighting back. While Beverly hadn't changed much, it seemed that she didn't want to lose her daughter, keeping her own wild opinion quiet in hopes of not being isolated on the Greek island with no family remaining, "I mean, if it was up to me I'd be telling her to go get a life!"

Beverly knew this was true. Ben was rarely ever wrong about things like this, and it seemed his spell still worked on hopeless romantics like her.

"Yeah..."

"She's a bright kid, Bev."

"I know... I know. But you know... my daughter," Beverly scoffed a bit, "... Has a mind of her own."

Ben wanted to chuckle at that. For the Dynamo singer Beverly Marsh to be saying that her daughter had a mind of her own... well, where did she think Ava inherited it from?

"Yeah. I see that," Ben exhaled. He glanced over at Beverly as she stood beside him, "I see that... but she's so young."

"I know."

"I mean, does she know what she really wants?" Ava truly loved Nick, of course, but was staying on Kalokairi really what they both wanted for the rest of their lives? "You see, I think part of her just wants to let you know that she isn't going to leave you alone here, on your own."

"Mhm—wait," Beverly shook her head, glancing over with her head cocked to the side, "What do you mean?"

"Bev, look," Ben sighed, turning to her, "I have two grown children, I know something about letting go. If Ava felt you were okay on your own, would she want something different for herself?"

Beverly lifted her hand with the glue gun, accidentally pointing it at Ben.

"Okay, here's the thing—"

Beverly rolled her eyes at herself and put the gun down.

"I love being on my own. I really do!" she lied, "You know, every morning I get up and I thank God that I don't have some middle-aged menopausal man telling me how to run my life! You know? I'm free, and I'm single. And... it's great."

Of course, Beverly was lying, but she really really didn't want to get into this with Ben now. Unfortunately for her, Ben was done with the excuses. When she tried walking away, he stood his ground, stepping in the mother's direction boldly, pulling out a song he remembered from long ago.

Where are those happy days, they seem so hard to find?

I tried to reach for you, but you have closed your mind

Whatever happened to our love?

I wish I understood

It used to be so nice, it used to be so good

So when you're near me, darling can't you hear S.O.S.

The love you gave me, nothing else can save me S.O.S.

When you're gone

How can I even try to go on?

When you're gone

Though I try how can I carry on?

Beverly opened her mouth to speak but Ben had already turned away. He grabbed some decorations for the plants in the courtyard and helped the employees hang them up.

Beverly hid in the doorway of the motel kitchen, admiring the strong shoulder, back, neck, every other portion of muscle on Ben's body. She was sickened and happy to find that nothing had really changed about Ben Hanscom.

And yet, everything had changed about Ben.

His face was experienced, wiser than twenty years before—as if he had lived through humbling struggles. Beverly figured these had to do with the two children he mentioned. It pained the singer to know even after what they had, he returned to Nebraska without a second thought. Just like at the end of their relationship, Beverly felt as if Ben was on another planet.

She continued singing, quietly to be sure Ben wouldn't hear her.

You seem so far away though you are standing near

You made me feel alive, but something died I fear

I really tried to make it out

I wish I understood

What happened to our love, it used to be so good

So when you're near me, darling can't you hear me S.O.S.

The love you gave me, nothing else can save me S.O.S.

When you're gone (When you're gone)

How can I even try to go on? (How can I even try to go on?)

When you're gone (When you're gone)

Though I try how can I carry on? (Though I try how can I carry on?)

"I love you!" Beverly blurted with the largest smile Ben had ever seen before.

"You... Y-You... love me?"

"Yes."

Beverly immediately started giggling, covering her face in shock as Ben grinned like there was no tomorrow.

"We—We've only known each other... haha!!! I love you, too, Bev!!!"

"Good," Beverly sighed with relief, pressing her forehead to Ben's as the moonlight flickered over their forms, "Because that's probably the only way you'll forgive me for this."

Without giving Ben time to think, Beverly pushed him off the dock and into the water, jumping in after as they cackled and giggled and splashed each other. No one was on the island to tell them to shut up or keep it down. No one could tell them what they wanted was crazy or ridiculous. No one was there to remind them of the harsh reality Ben left in America. There was no need for an S.O.S call, not when all they had was right there in front of them.

They never wanted to leave Kalokairi, and they never wanted to leave each other's embrace.

While twenty years had passed, Beverly was ashamed to still find that the case now.

Ben stared at Beverly for a long moment, trying to find a trace of the love they once held for each other. When Beverly's poker face shielded that love, Ben turned away, disenchanted, and walked away. It was the same scene from before, only this time, Beverly felt her heart breaking in two different directions.

Ben was lost to her once more, as was her only daughter, Ava.

As relationships were tested on the island, Audra (now fully rested) and Bill were awkwardly sharing a quiet paddleboat ride on the beach coast, nothing but the waves serving as a conversation starter. Audra tried keeping a low profile, hoping Bill wouldn't see how interested in him she was. Even after the whole alcohol, Audra was hesitant on approaching Bill in a romantic manner—since he was, technically, Beverly's ex and Ava's possible father.

"Beverly must be tearing her hair out doing this wedding on her own," Bill commented stiffly, though he was genuine, "What would the father of the bride normally do?"

"Pay," Audra answered without a second thought, "Though my dad drew the line at my third."

"... I see."

The amount of money Beverly has probably sacrificed for Ava, Bill thought sadly, face turning into a frown. Being a single mother is difficult enough, but running a hotel in the midst of her daughter's adolescence? That's almost impossible, and I wouldn't believe it if it wasn't Beverly we were talking about...

And as Ava's father, that would mean I should have paid for the majority of this wedding.

Bill stood.

"Excuse me."

"Bill?" Audra questioned.

Before she received a response, Bill un-gracefully launched himself into the water, skin slapping across the surface. Audra shrieked with surprise, "Bill! Let's pick up where we left off last night!" she tried to persuade him.

Bill stopped swimming to turn and give her a surprised look.

“Do you mean that?” he meekly asked.

Oh God, that was adorable, Audra thought before nodding at him, smiling beautifully, “Of course, dummy! I... had fun, and I really do want to know more about your books...”

He looked at her with big, hopeful blue eyes, before he grinned, “I’ll be right back!” then, he continued swimming towards the shore.

10:33 AM

8 hours until the wedding

Richie and Eddie walked along the path in the forest that led to the hotel, with their stomachs full and a lot to think about.

Their connection.

Their relationship.

Last night...

Eddie felt so fucking exhilarated—it was like he was finally having the rebellious phase he never got to experience as a teenager. But he knew he wasn’t using Richie just for... a phase. This wasn’t high school.

He was a forty-year-old man.

Eddie could lie to himself how much he wanted about being too drunk to remember last night—he remembered everything. The dancing, the laughter, the alcohol keeping them warm, Richie’s kisses on his lips, neck, body... his touches still lingered, even after Eddie showered, and he recalls how the bed creaked when they made love, Richie’s blissful expression when he climaxed and the euphoria Eddie felt when reached it as well, just seconds after.

“I can hear you thinking,” Richie softly said.

Eddie stopped walking, looking at a bird that had landed on top of a rock as a form of distraction before speaking, “I... this is intense.”

Richie nodded, “Yup. I feel it too. And I’m...” what was a better word for ‘scared’? The sailor definitely didn’t want Eddie thinking that he regretted everything, because even though Richie was a coward when it came to having a serious relationship with someone—he was exhausted at himself from all the people he abandoned after they confessed they ‘loved him’.

Eddie Kaspbrak was different.

And Richie had no fucking clue why. Why did he instantly found the man wearing a red hoodie, drinking orange juice by himself, with his big, stupid, adorable soulful brown eyes different? They barely knew each other—for fuck’s sake, it’s been less than twenty-four hours since they met.

And yet... here Richie was. Wanting to hold Eddie’s hand like a sappy couple would when taking a stroll in the woods.

“Rich? You’re what?” Eddie asked, his voice small. Afraid.

“I’m... starting to think that there’s a reason why I answered the siren’s call to come here,” Richie decided to say as he stared intently at the other.

Eddie blinked, and then he rolled his eyes with a good-naturedly smile.

“Of course, and let me guess, I’m the siren?”

“Fuck yeah you are, babe,” Richie laughed as he reached for Eddie’s hand—but the single dad was fast, dodging it by continuing walking. Richie was confused at first, but when Eddie turned around to give him a sly look, he relaxed.

“Oh... so you’re one of those?”

“One of what?”

“A poet kind of seducer,” Eddie stated.

Richie chortled, “Nah, I just think you’re pretty.”

Eddie lost his smug expression to a bashful one, “Shut up! I’m a middle-aged man, I can’t be pretty.”

Richie approached Eddie, “Oh, babe, to me—you are.”

Eddie gulped, nervously backing away faster than you could say ‘making out in the woods’.

Richie however, didn’t want to give up. So he started to sing a special song he had wrote for Beverly—and even though what he felt for Eddie was stronger, he felt like it would fit with this situation.

“When you were lonely, you needed a man. Someone to lean on, well I understand. It’s only natural,” Richie, wanting to be the adventurer he was, climbed on a rock to show off—but when he slipped and almost fell on the ground, Eddie laughed, *“But why did it have to be me?”* He recovered quickly and bowed at the other as if he had finished a good stand-up show.

He stalked towards Eddie and circled him with a smirk, *“Nights can be empty and nights can be cold, so you were looking for someone to hold. That’s only natural, but why did it have to be me?”*

Eddie walked away to sit down on a large rock nearby, and Richie quickly took the seat next to the shorter man, scooting closer before Richie leaned in for a kiss but Eddie cupped his cheek gently and shooed him away with a smirk, he opened his mouth to continue the duet.

“I was so lonesome, I was blue. I couldn’t help it, it had to be you and I... Always thought you knew the reason why...” Eddie was so happy to be singing again that when he kicked the air, his shoe flew away, making Richie clap on his knee and laugh.

As an act of small revenge, he leaned towards Richie as if he was about to kiss him, and the taller man dropped his laughter, relieved when Eddie finally was on board with it—but Eddie pulled away last second, chuckling at Richie’s mild frustrated expression and he stood up, pulling Richie with him by the arm for a dance as both started singing now.

I only wanted a little love affair

Now I can see you are beginning to care

But baby... believe me...

It's better to forget me

Richie didn't like the last part, that was because both he and Bev knew their summer love wasn't gonna last—and to show Eddie he didn't have the intentions of forgetting this amazing man, he suddenly dipped him down (finding his small, surprised shriek adorable). He stared at Eddie for a long time and noticed that the other's face was more solemn compared to how bright it had been.

"Men are the toys in the game that you play... When you get tired, you throw 'em away... That's only natural, but why did it have to be me?" Eddie sang, his tone sadder now as he cupped Richie's face, brushing his finger on his unshaved jaw.

No, no, no, no more running! Richie panicked internally before bringing Eddie back up to embrace him and singing emotionally, to make sure his message got across.

"Falling in love with a man like you, happens so quickly, there's nothing to do... it's only natural, I'm glad it happened to me..."

Eddie laughed, touched by Richie's words as he pressed a kiss on his lips, finalizing the song.

"We've only just met..." the manager laughed, his lips still hovering Richie's.

"And you're not that type of man?" Richie quipped, waggling his eyebrows.

Eddie thought about the events from last night, "It's a... recent thing?" he managed to say—and both chuckled again before kissing passionately.

We're acting like a couple of horny teenagers, Eddie thought without a care in the world.

He only hoped Nick would take this well and Beverly wouldn't kill him for falling for one of her ex's. All he could do was envy her for meeting twenty-year-old Richie Tozier.

If he was hot now, Eddie couldn't imagine how this tanned sailor looked like twenty years ago.

"I have to go get ready, Bev is probably panicking without me and my son is getting married..." Eddie told him as he took a step away from the kiss.

"Oh, right. The wedding," Richie grinned, enamored.

Eddie sighed as the two made their way up to the hotel again, and this time there was no space between them—they held hands for everyone to see.

As a distraction from everything, Beverly was desperately keeping herself busy, still wanting her precious daughter to have the best wedding ever in spite of their argument earlier. She threw plates onto the dining tables with no pattern or style, thinking if Eddie was here he would scold her and place them accordingly.

Where was that man, anyway?!

"Yes, any color, any pattern, doesn't matter—no, no, Eddie isn't here so just do as I say, please. There's no plan—God knows there's no plan," she ranted to the employees.

A soaking wet Bill wearing a life jacket and holding an envelope came up the stairs, unseen by Beverly, "It looks good, though..." she sighed, looking at the tables spread around the courtyard.

"Beverly, where would you like this?"

"Carlos... get the meat, out of the heat. Okay? Put a cover on that thing!"

Beverly turned around, startled by the sudden appearance of Bill.

"Bill! What are you doing here?"

“Hello,” the taller greeted, handing his ex the envelope, “I just wanted to give you this.”

“I don’t mean here here, Bill, I mean...” Beverly’s eyes drifted to the look at the paper as she blindly pulled it out from the envelope. A check was written out for her, totaling to a total of... “Why are you on this Islan—! What—is this?!!”

Thankfully, Bill was used to Beverly’s shrieks. Beverly gaped at the twenty-seven thousand, two hundred and twenty euros check (equal to roughly thirty-thousand dollars), wondering if she was stuck in some kind of daydream.

“I realized you’ll have had to tighten your belt a bit over the years, bringing-up Ava on your own, and I just wanted to make a... small contribution to the wedding,” Bill explained simply.

Beverly looked up at his old flame, blue eyes so adoring and grateful Beverly thought herself in danger of falling in love again.

“I can’t... accept this, I can’t...”

“No.”

“Bill, I can’t—”

“No,” The writer turned and began jogging away, “You’ll have to catch me first. I have to return to Audra, bye!”

While Bill’s stance was awkward, he ran away fairly quickly, and Beverly could only stand in the courtyard with that stupidly shocked expression on her face.

What a wedding this was going to be.

On the other side of Kalokairi, Ava was running down the dock to find Nick, who was just finishing the deal with a mainlander who sold him some décor for the wedding. The bride-to-be was breathless and panicked by the time she made it to the end of the dock.

“Nick!” Ava cried, leaning down to catch her breath.

“What’s the matter?” he was on his feet immediately, looking at her with a concerned expression.

“You have to help me.”

Without another explanation, Ava ran back down the dock.

“Why, what’s happened?” Nick asked, hurriedly sprinting after his fiancé, “Ava?!”

The engaged pair chased each other up some rocks and onto a beaten path underneath a row of palm trees.

“Ava! Hey!”

Nick finally got a hold of Ava and made her stop.

“Ava!” He sighed, leaning over on his knees, “What’s the matter?!”

“I’ve done something completely insane!” Ava confessed, hands resting on her head frantically, “All my dads are here for a wedding and they all think they’re giving me away!”

Man, that really DOES make me sound crazy...

Nick gave a confused laugh, hands now at his sides.

“All your what?” he asked. Ava felt so guilty lying to him...

“I read mom’s diary—and I have three possible fathers.”

“But... how are they here now?”

Ava bit her lip and gave a quick exhale.

“I invited them.”

Nick’s usually calm brown eyes flickered with confusion, and then abrupt understanding. His lips parted in utter shock, and Ava hurried to correct and cover-up her ignorance.

“I thought that I would know my dad right away, but I didn’t, I just—now I have no idea, and now my mom is gonna kill me, and they’re

gonna hate me, and you—”

“Hold on, hold on,” Nick interrupted, “You invited these guys... and didn’t tell me?”

“No, I thought you would... try to stop me,” Ava paused, sensing her fiancé’s hurt, “I know I messed-up—”

Nick’s entire demeanor changed from one of confusion to sadness. Those strong shoulders dropped in defeat as a thought came over him.

“Ava,” he began slowly, eyebrows high with anticipation, “Is that what this whole big white wedding is about? You finding your dad?”

“No!!! No, of course not, Nick!” Ava shrieked.

“...Are you sure?”

“It’s—It’s about knowing who I am, and I wanted to get married knowing who I am!”

For the first time in a long time, Nick’s voice was sharp in his response to his fiancé.

“That doesn’t come from finding your father,” he snapped, “That comes from finding yourself!”

Ava froze in her spot.

Ben happened to be strolling this part of the island, and, recognizing the voices of Nick and his daughter, heading in their direction for an investigation. Ava sounded similar to Beverly when she was upset—and Iwaizumi would know.

“And the irony is, I wanted to travel to find myself, but I put everything on hold for you,” Nick ran his eyes over Ava’s face lovingly, despite the betrayal of the situation, “Because I loved you, and I wanted what you wanted, and now, I don’t know.”

“You don’t know if you love me?” Ava asked fearfully as Nick brushed past her.

“Of course I love you—I’d just wish you told me!”

The auburn-haired bride felt her heart ache at that comment, but she couldn’t find it in herself to move as Ben came walking from the direction Nick was headed.

“Is everything okay?” Ben asked the groom, only to be utterly ignored. He continued on to Ava, who was now making a move to follow her fiancé.

“Ava, what’s wrong?”

“Not now, Ben.”

“Yes yes yes, now, because I’m supposed to be giving you away! And how can I when I know you’re not really gonna be happy?”

Ava wanted to roll her eyes at Ben but refrained from doing so only because her eyes were teary.

“I’ve heard all this from my mother and I think she knows me better than you do.”

“I know,” the architect sighed deeply, “But I’ve done the big white wedding and believe me, it doesn’t always end in happily ever after.”

“That’s you, that’s not me, okay?!” Ava shouted back in irritation, “I love Nick more than anything in the world, and I—I—” she gave a frustrated grunt, “Ugh! Did you feel that way before you got married?!”

Considering Ben was still in love with Beverly when he married Hannah, he would have to go with—

“... No.”

Ava had enough of this unsatisfying conversation and ran off again, leaving Ben to ponder over his own regretful past. He only wished he had felt the way Ava did about Nick back when he married Hannah... if things had ended differently with Beverly, maybe Ava would have a better example to look after. Maybe she wouldn’t be settling down at all. Relationships don’t always end well after following tradition—

a one night only girl band member once taught Ben that.

If only he had followed their advice.

Later into the afternoon, mere hours before the wedding was to start, Beverly and the employees just finished the courtyard and reception décor; despite spreading rumors about the wedding, it was still on, and Beverly put all her childish concerns aside and focused solely on making Ava happy. If a white wedding was really what she and Nick wanted, Beverly would give them that.

After all, it would be the last gift she gave her daughter for a while if they left the island after the wedding.

Just as Beverly finished decorating, none other than Ava herself came hurrying into the scene. Her mother was a bit shocked to see her, already thinking her to be getting ready with her friends.

“Hey, aren’t you supposed to be getting dressed? Where’s Lisa and Ali?” she asked with fake excitement.

Ava ignored the comment and stopped in front of her mom, hands on her hips.

“Will you help me?”

While Beverly was a bit surprised, she couldn’t contain her smile and nodded immediately, “Mhm!”

Ava hurried off frantically, looking at her watch as the bride's stress began to take over; her mother giggled behind her, assuring her daughter they had plenty of time to prepare.

“Wait, it’s okay, it’s okay!” she chuckled, “We have time...”

The mother and daughter quietly entered Ava’s room, and Beverly readied the makeup and dress while Ava took a quick shower. All the while, the reality was finally beginning to hit Beverly.

Her daughter was getting married.

Within the next hour or so, she was going to be Nick's wife! That was a crazy thought. Hadn't she just finished high school the other day? Wasn't it just a few months ago she learned how to swim? Weren't Lisa and Ali her new friends, ones she met at school? Beverly swore Ava was only a baby, surprising everyone with her gender when her kicks and babyish attitude while inside her mother's stomach gave everyone confirmation that she must have been a sassy little boy.

Beverly had to alter the lyrics to the song she wrote for her baby oh so long ago, hoping Ava would grow to be a wonderful, adventurous spirit as her parent had been.

Ava became that person, and so much more.

When Ava sat down in her towel, trying to find the perfect makeup at her vanity desk, Beverly stood to the side, watching thoughtfully, quietly singing the lullaby that used to put Ava to sleep effortlessly. Beverly wished that were the case now, so the pair could have a few more minutes together, just the two of them.

Schoolbag in hand, she leaves home in the early morning

Waving goodbye with an absent-minded smile

I watch her go with a surge of that well-known sadness

And I have to sit down for a while

The feeling that I'm losing her forever

And without really entering her world

I'm glad whenever I can share her laughter

That funny little girl

Ava neglected to put a bandaid on the cut she made on her leg with the shaver, and Beverly insisted on her lying down and letting her mother kiss it better.

Slipping through my fingers all the time

I try to capture every minute

The feeling in it

Slipping through my fingers all the time

Do I really see what's in her mind

Each time I think I'm close to knowing

She keeps on growing

Slipping through my fingers all the time

They moved back to the mirror, running their hands through her damp hair while trying to decide which way to style it with the flower crown that held her veil.

Sleep in our eyes, her and me at the breakfast table

Barely awake, I let precious time go by

Then when she's gone, there's that odd melancholy feeling

And a sense of guilt I can't deny

What happened to the wonderful adventures

The places I had planned for us to go

(Slipping through my fingers all the time)

Well, some of that we did but most we didn't

And why, I just don't know

Beverly zipped the back of Ava's wedding dress, adjusting the straps on her pointed shoulder bones delicately; this was the most relaxed either of them had been all day long, and Ava couldn't help but sigh in relief. What would she do without her mother by her side?

Slipping through my fingers all the time

I try to capture every minute

The feeling in it

Slipping through my fingers all the time

Do I really see what's in her mind

Each time I think I'm close to knowing

She keeps on growing

Slipping through my fingers all the time...

Ava and Beverly turned to the full-length mirror in the corner of the room, admiring Ava's beauty; the flowy, Greek-style wedding dress complimented her figure perfectly, and the veil hung down over her back with elegance. Nick was totally going to bawl over his fiancé when Ava came down the aisle.

"Do you think I'm letting you down?" Ava asked sadly.

"Why would you even think that?"

Beverly turned her daughter around, demanding the reason with a surprised look.

"Well... because of what you've done, I mean—the Dynamos, raising a kid and running a business all on your own!" Ava explained. Her life was boring and grey compared to her mother's youth; what had she done that was memorable? She didn't go to college like Lisa and Ali. She didn't have three lovers within three weeks of each other. She hadn't even had sex three times yet!

"Well, honey... I didn't have a choice," Beverly huffed with a small smile, "I couldn't go home, you know... when I got pregnant, my father told me not to bother coming back. And I would have it any other way," she touched a lock of Ava's auburn hair affectionately, tears springing to her eyes, "My God, look at what we've had!"

Beverly pulled her daughter in for a hug, words sincere and truthful.

“You have always been my greatest experience, Ava. There’s never been any competition next to you.”

If I cry my makeup will be ruined!

“Will you give me away?” Ava blurted out, forcing her sniffles back. She couldn’t get herself into any more trouble, right? Her mom was by far a better parent than any of those men, anyway!

“Yeah,” Beverly agreed, her heart skipping a few beats, “Anything for you, honey.”

They pulled away with breathless smiles, looking at their reflections in the mirror one final time, together this time.

Sometimes I wish that I could freeze the picture

And save it from the funny tricks of time

Slipping through my fingers...

All the members of Ava’s bridal party met the pair at the bottom of the mountain, where Ava got on a donkey and began her journey up, towards the chapel where Nick was waiting for her. The sun was just beginning to hit the ocean, creating a beautiful and melancholy orange hue over the island—Beverly remained behind for a moment, just watching the breathtaking scenery.

If anyone deserved her smart, hilarious, responsibly wild daughter, it was Nick. He was the only person worthy of Ava. Beverly knew this truth and nodded to herself before stepping onto the rocky path behind the wedding party.

In the chapel, Eddie stared at his son with a fond expression. Nick looked nervous as everyone waited for the bride to arrive.

Looking at his son, dressed smartly and about to say the biggest ‘I do’ anyone could say, made Eddie think about Myra. His marriage with her twenty-five years ago had been rushed and manipulated by his fear of repressed sexuality and of dying alone. And the one (and only)

time he ever consumed their marriage was when Nick was conceived—a surprised that both shocked Myra and Eddie—but if that got Eddie to stay, Myra happily gave him a son as if it meant ‘now you can never leave me.’

But that changed when Eddie felt attracted to a man.

His messy divorce was almost a forgotten memory after all these years, and even though he wondered how Myra ended up as after tossing her husband and son like they were rats, Eddie hoped she had changed to a better person.

But Eddie focused on Nick now. Hours ago he had rushed into his dad’s bedroom, upset and talking about what Ava did—how he wasn’t sure if she really wanted to marry him or if she just wanted to find her father.

It seems that Ava told him.

Eddie was quick to calm down his fast-talking son—a trait that Eddie himself possessed—and promised him, as he helped the groom get ready, that Ava loved him more than anything in life.

And that was true.

Beverly and Eddie watched their children’s love sprout from innocent childhood friendship, puppy love, awkward flirting, and finally blossom into love when they were both sixteen.

But still... they should be living their lives. Not... settling down and probably staying on this island, working in the hotel as well. Sure, Eddie wanted his son to be near him, but that didn’t mean physically. Nick would always be in his heart—the first thought crossing on his mind, his love and his life.

The only good thing left from his shitty past.

Eddie couldn’t help it, he’d hear Beverly sing the lullaby to Ava when she was a child, and the emotions overcoming himself let a small portion of the song out naturally, in a quiet—emotional whisper.

Schoolbag in hand he leaves home in the early morning

Waving goodbye with an absent-minded smile...

Tearing up, he felt a hand rest on his knee from the wooden bench he was sitting. He looked up to see Richie, giving him a comforting smile as he squeezed his hand.

Wordlessly, Eddie placed his hand over Richie's and leaned closer to him, not caring if anyone would get suspicious.

"Thank you..." he whispered.

With Richie by his side, if he stayed, Eddie would be fine.

Yeah, he would.

Notes for the Chapter:

leave a comment, they make me happy!

6. Take a Chance On This Dream

Summary for the Chapter:

A bunch of middle-aged people singing about wanting to fuck

ALSO, IT'S APHRODITE'S!!!

good children with enough money to travel leave their nest

Notes for the Chapter:

welp, here we are. The end. Finito. It's over.

Thank you so much for reading this story!! I love every single one of you losers and I hope this little crack-head crossover fic made ya'll smile as much as it did me.

I didn't do Mike justice, and I'm ashamed of that. But when you follow a movie with certain characters it's hard to add even more to it.

Anyways, I might write an epilogue. Like... 4 years later?

And don't worry, Beverly ain't dead lmao.

“Beverly!”

Mother of all things! Beverly sighed, reluctantly turning at the sound of Ben's voice. Why is he always here?!!

Ben jogged up to his old lover, looking good in his charcoal suit, not that Beverly noticed.

“Bev, I need to talk to you about who's giving Ava away.”

“That would be me,” The auburn-haired woman answered surely,

brushing past Ben.

“But—what about her dad?” Ben questioned, following after the other.

“Her dad isn’t here.”

“It’s what she wants! She told me she wants her father here—what if her father wants that, too?”

“What?” Beverly asked tiredly, shaking his head. “Ben, don’t do this now, I can’t... do this now,” her laugh was bitter, “I can’t hear this right now!”

“Bev, listen to me,” The architect pleaded as his eyebrows scrunched together desperately. He had been thinking all day and now it was time, to tell the truth, “This is about us!”

Beverly froze in her position, eyes shooting over to Ben. A song came to her mind right away, maybe just from spite, because she knew Ben hated this song—he always said it made him too sad. But Beverly had enough courage to throw the lyrics back at him, trying to maintain enough dignity, enough pride to erase Ben Hanscom from her mind, once and for all. The worst part of all?

Beverly didn’t want to.

I don't wanna talk about things we've gone through

Though it's hurting me, now it's history

I've played all my cards and that's what you've done too

Nothing more to say, no more ace to play

The winner takes it all

The loser standing small beside the victory, that's her destiny

How did they end up like this? How had something so beautiful turned out so sour? Beverly remembered every detail, every night

they spent in Ben's boat staring at the stars, planning their future on this island together; when they were young, nothing could stop them except for the mention of a previous engagement. If Beverly hadn't been running away in the first place... who knows where they could have run away to *together*?

I was in your arms thinking I belonged there

I figured it made sense, building me a fence

Building me a home, thinking I'd be strong there

But I was a fool, playing by the rules

The Gods may throw a dice, their minds as cold as ice

And someone way down here loses someone dear!!

The winner takes it all, the loser has to fall

It's simple and it's plain, why should I complain?

What was her name? The wretched soul Ben had first fallen for—Hannah? Beverly was just a little too late from a happy ending. Just a few months earlier and they could have lived their fairytale out. The funny tricks of the time were at it again, and now, Beverly needed to go. But she couldn't without letting Ben know that she couldn't, had never stopped loving him, even after all these years.

Tell me does she kiss, like I used to kiss you

Does it feel the same when she calls your name?

Somewhere deep inside you must know I miss you...

But what can I say... rules must be obeyed

The judges will decide the likes of me abide

Spectators of the show... always staying low!!!

The game is on again, a lover or a friend

A big thing or a small, the winner takes it all!!!!

I don't wanna talk 'cause it makes me feel sad

And I understand you've come to shake my hand

I apologize if it makes you feel bad...

Seeing me so tense, no self-confidence

But you see...

The winner takes it aaaaaaall!!!!!!

The winner takes it aaaaaaaaaaall!!!!!!

THE GAME IS ON AGAIN! (on again)

A lover or a friend (or a friend)

A big thing or a small (big or small)

The winner takes it aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaall!!!

Beverly ran away from a despairing Ben in tears, not bothering to pick up her scarf when it flew off as she sprinted up the mountain, hurrying to make it in time. Her love was over, but Ava's was just beginning. Her scarf was lost, just like she lost Ben, even with their songs and adventures. The CEO now lived a fairytale life with his wife and children, while Beverly was left behind with a child and no husband—maybe that was for the best. Maybe Ava was all she ever needed in life to be happy.

But still.

Even if the sweet Ben Hanscom wasn't Ava's father... he was still Beverly's true love. And she shed a few tears of her own when she glanced back after reaching the top of the mountain, looking at nothing but Ben.

So the winner takes it all

And the loser has to fall

So the winner takes it all

And the loser has to fall

“BEVERLY!!” Ben shouted from the cliff, looking up at Beverly desperately.

“*The winner takes it... all...*” Beverly turned away, knowing she was, and always had been since the beginning, the loser in this game.

When she walked up to the wedding party, Lisa and Ali became frantically relieved, tugging and pulling at her arms with concern.

“Beverly, there you are!”

“It’s okay, she’s here!”

“Panic over! Here she is.”

“Oh, don’t worry,” Beverly brushed off, along with a few tears that had fallen onto her cheeks, “I’m fine, I’m fine!”

Ava went to interrogate her mother, but they received the signal from one of the band members from inside—it was time to start the wedding. Lisa and Ali hurried behind their friend as she took the arm of Beverly, giving her a side glance that asked many questions; but there was no time for answers nor severe questions.

Just as Beverly caught her breath, the church doors opened, and music began to play.

The soft music was enough to calm her lingering emotions; she held Ava’s arm tightly, certainly, smiling lightly as they took their first step into the church, down the beautiful aisle that would lead the pair to Nick.

Beverly never imagined herself ever having this role in a wedding,

but she was far from disappointed—despite all the drama and chaos and questions, Ava was smiling like there was no tomorrow. Her skin glittered, her dress gracefully ran behind her figure, and her eyes were full of excitement. Who wouldn't want to be marrying such an energetic young woman? Everyone on the island knew of Nick's love for Ava, and vice versa. There would be no breaking this couple up. Beverly would make sure no one interfered in their relationship as people liked to with her own.

The bond created today would last now and forever.

Just to be on the safe side, reassuring herself that Ava still loved her, Beverly released a deep breath.

The small church crowd smiled in approval as Ava passed their rows slowly, a little blonde girl giggling shyly when Ava brushed her bouquet over her nose; Nick stood at the end quietly, trying to hide the fact that his eyes were tearing-up, though Pepper was quick to snicker about it behind him. How could Nick be more beautiful than usual? It was unbelievable to Ava, and yet, the evidence stood only feet away from her, smiling brightly and looking ridiculously attractive in a casual white suit.

Eddie smiled warmly as he watched the girl he had watched grow up with his son walk down the aisle. She looked so beautiful, and so much like her mom. But at the same time, he felt anxious for both of them. They were so young and this all seemed so rushed. Eddie squeezed Richie's hand for some comfort, and he noticed that the sailor's jaw was tense as he watched his possible daughter about to get married. Eddie smiled knowingly and kissed his cheek gently, relaxing Richie a bit.

Patty almost squealed as she took a dozen photos of Ava while Stan realized that this was happening to him and Patty in months—he suddenly felt the urge to marry her in this location, instead of the temple near their house. The island was so pretty, full of life and love and everyone here was so helpful and charming—he needed to talk with Patty after the ceremony.

Bill grinned widely at Ava's sight—he was sitting next to Audra. He returned to her as he promised and the two got to talk about their

dance, but it was clear that Bill was still hesitant with her, and Audra felt as if she was the one that needed to push him a little.

Part of Beverly wished the walk would last forever, or just long enough where she could re-live every moment with her daughter one last time.

Despite that wish not coming true, Beverly smiled sincerely and hugged Ava warmly when they came to a stop at the end of the aisle.

“I love you,” Beverly whispered. This was what she fought to protect for the last twenty years. Her beautiful relationship with Ava. What could ever defeat the friendship between a daughter and her mother?

“I love you, too, mom,” Ava answered.

Beverly forced her arms to release Ava, eyes dripping a few tears, though not ones of regret. Ava gave her a certain nod, turning away after a long moment. Beverly hurried to sit down between Audra and Patty, who leaned over and patted her arm in comfort—they were the only individuals aside from the bride and her mother themselves who understood how difficult this was for Beverly. However distressing the situation was, the happiness of this engagement overwhelmed the scale, and Mike Hanlon, the celebrant, began the marriage ceremony, Beverly had no desire to object.

She greeted him with a bright smile, and he nodded at her. Beverly made a mental note to properly say hello and thank him for marrying her daughter.

“Welcome to Ava and Nicholas, and to all your friends who have gathered together this evening,” Mike began, “And welcome especially to Beverly, who represents your family. We are all here together in this glorious—”

“And,” Beverly interrupted suddenly, standing before the small crowd, “Welcome to... to... Ava’s dad.”

Much of the guests gasped loudly, whispers immediately breaking out.

“I have to tell you he is here.”

“I know, I invited him!” Ava replied hastily.

Ben, Bill, and Richie all stood on their feet at the same time. Ben’s proud stance was broken when he noticed Richie standing, who turned and stared at Bill in shock as the shorter man blinked in confusion.

Eddie covered his mouth, trying not to laugh.

“You couldn’t,” Beverly replied slowly, “I don’t know which one it is!”

People mumbled amongst themselves as the three mystery almost-fathers awkwardly took their seats again, mind boggled over what Beverly was confessing to. What did she mean he didn’t know who the father was?! He couldn’t have slept with them all at once! Unless...

One of them is the guy Beverly ran off with after we broke up, Ben realized.

One of them is the bastard who broke Bev’s heart before we dated, Bill frowned.

We only did it once... but I guess that’s enough for anyone to get pregnant with this sperm! Richie cheered silently.

The realization hit Beverly right in the gut like a hammer. She gasped loudly, covering her mouth in utter shock.

“Oh my God!” She exclaimed wildly, “That’s why they’re all here!!!”

“I’m sorry!” Ava replied desperately, grabbing at her mom’s arms, “I’m sorry, mom, I just—please, please forgive me!”

“I don’t... know...” Beverly sniffled, eyes large and guilty, “Can you forgive me?”

“What?!” Ava cried, “I don’t care if you’ve slept with hundreds of men—”

Mike made a terrified expression.

“You’re my mom... and I love you so much.”

“Oh, Ava!”

Beverly tugged her daughter into another hug, crying into the veil with relief as Nick tried not to laugh behind them. He had a feeling their wedding wasn’t going to go down without some kind of dramatic incident. A few guests clapped as Ava and her mother separated, both wiping at their tears with silly smiles on their faces when Beverly turned back around, to the audience.

“And I haven’t slept with hundreds of men.”

Patty and Audra cackled with the crowd, though their laughter was abruptly interrupted by Ben, who stood back up and headed towards the front of the chapel.

“Am I getting this right?” Ben asked stressfully, “Ava may be mine, but she may be Richie’s or Bill’s?”

“Yeah. Yeah, that’s right,” Beverly confirmed, crossing her arms sassily, “And don’t get all self-righteous with me, because you have no one but yourself to blame.”

“Yeah!” Ava agreed proudly, “If you hadn’t just dumped my mother and gone off and married somebody else!”

“Hey hey, wait a minute!” the architect protested, “I had to go home, I was engaged!” and here comes the bombshell, “But I told Hannah I couldn’t marry her and came right back!”

The entire crowd gasped this time. Not in all their years of gossiping did the subject of Ben returning to Kalokairi for Beverly ever come up. How had they not heard?! Beverly looked just as shocked as everyone else, mouth open and blue eyes gleaming with hope. Ben,

her first true love, came back for her?

“You... you...”

The lead singer released a quick breath, trying to comprehend this new information.

“Why didn’t you call me?”

“Because I was crazy enough to think that you would be waiting for me,” Ben replied, the hurt obvious in his voice, “Only when I arrived, they told me you were off with some other guy.”

Richie and Bill exchanged a guilty look with each other.

“So... Hannah called me an idiot and married me to prove it.”

Bill stood, sliding past the other guests to walk up next to Ben.

“Sorry, can I—might I just butt in?”

“No, Bill, no—” Beverly protested weakly. Her heart couldn’t take this, “You don’t have to!”

“No no, I just wanted to say it’s great to have even a third of Ava,” Bill said honestly, “I never thought I’d get that much of a child.”

His gaze went to Beverly, expression softening as they both replayed the moment when their love was solidified. It was in Paris, at a fancy restaurant with a Napoleon theme where Bill stole Beverly’s heart and convinced her of their love by serenading her with a geeky version of their favorite song: Waterloo.

“Bill,” Beverly sighed, leaning on the table in front of them, “We just met. Today.”

“Yes, but when you know, you know,” Bill stressed, “When you fall... you fall.”

Suddenly, the taller man stood.

“And when you’re defeated by love, you’re utterly defeated.”

Bill yanked Beverly out of her seat, snatching a white handkerchief from a waiter and running over to where a Napoleon statue sat on a stand. He waved the flag around Napoleon’s head as he sang.

“My my! At Waterloo, Napoleon did surrender—oh yeah!” Bill head-banged, “And I have met my destiny in quite a similar way—”

Bill pulled Beverly back onto her feet when he dipped down on one knee romantically and crawled towards her. It backfired on the young singer when Beverly took his hands, pulling them both into a spin.

“The history book on the shelf is always repeating itself!”

“No, no, I just wanted to say it's great to have even a third of Ava. I never thought I'd get even that much of a child. Beverly,” Bill addressed, words clear, “You were the first woman I ever loved,” His pause was suspicious and for good reason, “Well... the last one, really. Ever since our relationship—I’ve never loved any woman. I’ve been in a relationship but I can’t forget about ours—until today. Now, this gives me an excuse to come here much more often, to be more... spontaneous,” he shared a warm smile with Ava.

The crowd sat in confusion as Audra smiled hopefully.

Husband number four, come in.

“We can find out if you want,” Ben interrupted the awkwardness, looking at Ava seriously, “But... I’m with Bill. Being a third of your dad is great by me.”

Richie stood and waved his hand in agreement.

“Me too—I’ll take a third!”

“Typical, isn’t it?” Patty whispered to Stan, “You wait twenty years for a dad and then three come along at once.”

He snorted, this was by far the best wedding he's ever been to.

Eddie just couldn't stop smiling at the whole situation, he made it clear to tease Beverly later.

In a strange turn of events, Beverly sat down beside her friends (hardly breathing) as Ava's fathers settled behind her, motioning for the priest to continue with the ceremony. Ava's mind was enlightened, spinning in the right direction as she turned around, feeling clear and focused for the first time in weeks.

"Dearly beloved—" Mike tried once more, still a little stunned.

Ava whipped around, facing her fathers with a huge grin.

"You know, I have no clue which one of you is my dad, but I don't mind!" she laughed, "Now I know what I really want."

Everyone in the church held their breath as Ava turned to Nick and took his hands.

"Nick, let's just not get married!"

A few people were close to passing out with shock, but none were closer than Beverly herself.

"What?" Nick asked, stunned, but in a pleasant sort of way.

"Oh shit," Eddie said under his breath, laughing a little now.

"You never wanted this, anyway!" Ava giggled, jumping up and down, "I know that now; let's just—get off this island and just see the world, okay?"

Nick could respond in no other way than a loving smile, beaming at his no longer fiancé with adoration.

"I love you..."

Ava squealed happily as Nick kissed her passionately and lifted her,

walking them down the aisle as the church crowd spoke in confused, but strangely happy whispers. Beverly stood and walked to Mike in a daze.

“Beverly,” Mike asked with worry as guests began exiting the church, “Do I take it the wedding is canceled?”

“... I’m not entirely sure what’s happening right now... sorry I asked you to come here for nothing I—”

“Hang on—”

Ben’s voice stopped everyone, and all eyes went to him. There the CEO stood, in the middle of the aisle, a majority of the church crowd backing him up. His gaze was locked on Beverly and Beverly alone when the next words came out of his mouth.

“Why waste a good wedding?”

To say the wedding party was shook would be an understatement. Beverly’s mouth dropped open as he grinned, eyes wider than ever before. Did Ben really just say what everyone thought he did? Why waste a good wedding? What the hell did that mean?! Beverly didn’t want to lead herself on, and so ignored the meaning until Ben continued the request, stepping forward in her direction.

No freaking way. This is not happening. This is NOT NOT NOT happening on the day of Ava’s almost-wedding!!!

“How bout it, Marsh?” Ben smiled gently, “You’re going to need someone to boss around on this island of yours.”

“Are you nuts?” Beverly replied in disgust, though part of her young soul was itching to do something impulsive... “I am not a bigamist!”

“Neither am I,” Ben admitted, putting a hand over his heart, “I’m a divorced man who’s loved you for twenty years... and ever since I stepped foot on this island I’ve been trying to tell you how much I love you.”

Ben slowly knelt down, offering his open arms to Beverly as Ava squealed beside him. Ava ran past Ben to join their side, giggling and blushing with excitement.

What kind of wedding voodoo was this? Had they accidentally taken a trip to the past or something? This wasn't real. There was no way in HELL Beverly would agree to this random asking of her hand in marriage...even if it was to the love of her life. No way! It was too... too...

"Come on, Bev!" Ben cheered, "It's only the rest of your life!"

To tempt Beverly more, he motioned for the musicians to play and began to sing one of her favorite songs.

"I can't conceal it, don't you see, can't you feel it?"

The music paused, waiting for Beverly to continue the lyrics—when she didn't, standing there like a mindless idiot, Audra, Patty, Ava, and the bridesmaids leaned towards her, egging her answer out.

"Say I dooooo! I do, I do, I do, I do, I do!"

"Beverly please show it, you love me, and you know it!" Ben winked.

"Say I dooooo!"

Beverly blinked once, and her mouth opened.

"I do!"

She gasped at her response.

"I do!"

"EEEEEEEP!!!!"

"OH MY GOSH!!!"

Beverly ran forward as the crowd cheered louder than ever, bursting into grins and laughs of happy shock when she embraced Ben after

twenty long years, kissing him passionately and throwing her arms around his shoulders. It was an astounding feeling, flashing Ben's memory back to their very first kiss in his small little boat before Kalokairi was a romantic destination for the entire world.

Back when it was only a stepping stone for him and Beverly Marsh, lead singer of the Dynamos.

"Here's the ring, here's the ring!"

Ben didn't stop smiling when he and Beverly partially broke their embrace to slide Nick and Ava's rings on, happily sacrificed by the young couple as Mike came forward and continued the wedding ceremony as if no changes had been made.

Eddie quickly slipped next to Richie, watching the whole situation with a grin on his face as the two quickly held hands.

Beverly hardly heard a single word until the end, too full of a joy she hadn't felt in so long tears fell from her eyes and dripped onto her blinding smile. Ava had never seen her mother looking so beautiful, and cried along with her as they slipped the rings on.

"I now pronounce you man and wife!" Mike shouted over the cheers of the crowd.

Ben grabbed Beverly and kissed her once more, knowing that while no amount of kisses could make-up for their lost time, this was an incredible start to something even better than teenage romance. This... this was what they had both wanted. Money, fame, attention, none of that even came remotely close to what they had, what they always had between them—Ben wondered what his sons would think of him returning with a new wife.

Although at this moment, when he and Beverly ran out of the church crying and kissing, he couldn't think of a good excuse to ever return.

The reception ended-up feeling totally different from the original scene the employees had in their heads. When the church crowd returned from the mountain, news spread that Beverly had been the

one who got married and that Ava and Nick broke off their engagement. They didn't believe it until Ben crashed the awaiting party by carrying Beverly in his arms, Nick and Ava right behind them, smiling and holding hands lovingly.

Richie and Eddie seemed closer than ever, and on their way here, Eddie finally told Beverly what happened between the two and that they were going to try for a relationship—she took it well enough, but she also threatened Richie in case he decided to hurt Eddie's feelings.

Nick was happy for his father, as Beverly thought he would. And it wasn't awkward as Eddie thought it would be—he and Richie got along pretty well so there wasn't any drama between the three.

It took a good hour for everyone to settle down and finally accept whatever the hell had happened in that little chapel. Beverly needed three glasses of wine before her blood pressure went down to a safe level.

Once the guests sat down, Ben melted Beverly's heart for the hundredth time with his toast, in which he sang his personal favorite song of the Dynamos. He looked forward to hearing it for the rest of his life.

Here's to us one more toast and then we'll pay the bill

Deep inside both of us can feel the autumn chill

Birds of passage, you and me

We fly instinctively

When the summer's over and the dark clouds hide the sun

Neither you nor I'm to blame when all is said and done

Ben couldn't help to lean down and kiss Beverly softly on the lips.

In our lives, we have walked some strange and lonely treks

Beverly chuckled at that, “Yeah!” she agreed as she looked at Ava, who was laughing as Nick kissed her hands.

Slightly worn but dignified and not too old for sex

Everyone cheered at that, but Richie was the loudest as he let out a ‘fuck yeah!’ before Eddie covered his face in embarrassment. He was smiling too—though.

Patty raised her glass at the sailor, completely agreeing as she winked at Stan, who shook his head while chuckling.

Clear-headed and open-eyed

With nothing left untried

Standing calmly at the crossroads, no desire to run

There's no hurry any more when all is said and done

Standing calmly at the crossroads, no desire to run

There's no hurry any more when all is said... and done

Everyone sang the last part with soft voices.

Eddie and Richie were gazing at each other as they did.

Audra stared at Bill, with a new determined look on her face.

And Stan sighed lovingly, bringing Patty’s hand to his lips to press a kiss on the wedding band he’d place on her finger when he proposed.

The crowd cheered quieter this time, their shock at this pure love too much, though none was more impressed than Ava herself. She had been crying the most throughout the night, comforted always by Nick, who held her close and whispered happy thoughts in her ear.

The night could not have ended better. Her wedding day could not have ended better, and she didn’t even end up getting married! While the plan hadn’t worked out, Ava was happy because her mother was

happy.

And to Ava, that was enough proof that no matter where they each ended-up, their bond would never break.

Audra smiled for her friend as she sat at the end of a table with Bill, who was also equally thrilled for the two lovers, though his comment after the song was less than promising to him.

“That’s not for me,” Bill sighed, nodding at the newlyweds, “I’m a writer... a lone wolf.”

Audra’s eyebrows raised. She always did have the hots for Bill, and, well... since Beverly was married now... it would be alright—right?

She leaned towards Bill and began singing quietly.

“If you change your mind. I’m the first in line.”

The writer gave her a weird look.

“Honey, I’m still free. Take a chance on me...”

“Sorry,” Bill said, getting up and going to walk away. Audra jumped up and followed after, grabbing his arm.

“If you need me, let me know! I’m gonna be around. If you got no place to go if you’re feeling down!”

With a strike of determination, Audra pushed Bill down in a chair and grabbed a nearby glass, clinking on it with a knife.

“SPEECH!!!” she hollered.

The other guests began clinking along, their attention immediately turning to Audra when she jumped up on one of the dining tables.

“I’m gonna make a speech, everybody!”

Patty squealed with delight as Audra threw her glass to the side,

pointing a finger directly at Bill as another song came to her from years and years ago. It had worked on several young men then, so what was stopping her now?

If you're all alone

When the pretty birds have flown

Honey, I'm still free

Take a chance on me

Gonna do my very best

And it ain't no lie

If you put me to the test

If you let me try

Take a chance on me

Take a chance on me

Bill tried to escape, but Audra jumped off the table and snatched him back up.

"We can go dancing!"

"We can go walking..." Bill sang nervously.

"As long as we're together..." Audra winked, *"Listen to some music!"*

"Maybe just talking?" Bill suggested, singing before gulping.

"You'd get to know me better..." Audra remarked, not backing down.

Richie suddenly joined the party, standing up dramatically as he grabbed Eddie, pulling him onto the dance floor.

'Cause you know I've got

So much that I wanna do

When I dream I'm alone with you

It's magic!

They kissed in front of everyone, earning a grin from Beverly and even more cheering from the party.

Meanwhile, Audra smirked when Bill tried to escape on the roof as the partiers began dancing, Patty letting herself be grabbed by Stan as he playfully dragged them to the floor.

Audra followed her possible lover and climbed onto the roof, following after him with determined lyrics. Beverly pulled Ben, her husband, to the courtyard, beaming as they began dancing to the music with everyone else.

"You want me to leave it there," Audra sang as she dangled herself on Bill's feet.

"Afraid of a love affair!" Bill admitted as he held on to the edge of the roof.

"But I think you know... that I can't let go..."

Quite literally, she would fall down to her possible death.

If you're all alone

When the pretty birds have flown

Honey, I'm still free

Take a chance on me

Gonna do my very best

And it ain't no lie

If you put me to the test

If you let me try

Take a chance on me

Take a chance on me

As Audra fell from the roof when Bill disappeared, she was surprised when he caught her in his arms, singing along with her as he finally realized that he had feelings for the redhead—they kissed to officialize their romance and joined the others on the dance floor.

Everyone on the entire island was dancing and hopping on the cobblestone, jumping next to each other and screaming the song out at the top of their lungs—as the song came to a high, something cracked beneath their feet. They only noticed when water began spraying from the broken crack in the courtyard, dousing everyone and widening the opening from the intense pressure. It cascaded around the couples in waves, and Beverly grabbed onto Ava with excited eyes.

“It’s Aphrodite!!!!!!”

Ava laughed and kissed her mother before turning around, trying to find her boyfriend through the chaos and fun.

Ben grabbed onto Beverly’s waist, pulling her close and kissing her passionately as the water soaked their clothes and hair—Beverly couldn’t help but see his entire life through the kiss.

The late nights with the Dynamos, the crazy streets of Paris, Bill’s awkward but sweet serenades of affection, Patty’s silly pranks, Audra’s many wonders, Richie and his silly sailor attitude... Ben Hanscom... the architect who broke Beverly’s heart and mended it all over again.

And Ava.

She couldn’t forget about Ava, her daughter, her everything, the reason she woke-up in the mornings... all her suffering had been for

good reason. Every hard day, every bill, every stepping stone, every concern... they all led Beverly to something beautiful. It may not have been the beauty she imagined as a youngster, but it was perfect.

...In the end, she got what she wanted and so much more.

Ben pulled back, his smile lighting up Beverly's heart as they let the water soak them to the bone.

"I told you you'd think it was crazy," Beverly quoted.

Ben laughed and shook his head.

"I don't think it's crazy, Bev,"

Ava managed to find Nick through the crowded area, jumping into his arms and his bare torso as they met for a kiss. They hadn't managed to get married today. That plan had failed miserably. But Ava didn't care. Because now... they had a new plan. One that didn't need planning or specifics. They had each other, and they were going to find each other again and again in hundreds of new places—Ava's dream for them had always been the same. It just took her a while to figure that out.

But she wouldn't have it any other way.

I have a dream...

A song to sing

To help me cope with anything

If you see the wonder of a fairytale

You can take the future, even if you fail

Nick and Ava were heading out early the next morning.

They packed a few pairs of clothing, passports, and their spirits. Ava told her mom to keep the rings, an early wedding gift of sorts. After

twenty years, Beverly was finally ready to see her daughter fly with Nick.

Their hug lasted forever on the end of the dock, but they could still feel it even after forever. All three fathers were present, giving their best to their daughter, Ben giving the most advice, as he was now Ava's father-in-law, or whatever title Ava wanted to use. The pair promised to be safe, and for once, Beverly didn't doubt that promise. For once, she was happy to say goodbye.

Eddie said goodbye to his son with a long hug and by making him promise to call or at least text him every day to tell him he was okay. He was also about to begin on various advice on how to avoid diseases from other countries when Richie intervened, hugging Nick as a way to also rescue him from his concerned father. Nick had laughed at the situation and it was then he knew his father would be fine with Richie around.

"I love you, Ava," Beverly smiled into Ava's auburn hair as the wind blew around them.

"I love you, too, mom."

Nick helped his girlfriend onto the boat carefully, and they set off to the mainland, going wherever their hearts took them. Ava waved to the five figures standing on the dock, smiling when she saw Ben hugging her mom from behind, wiping her final tear away with a gentle hand. The wind was blowing a familiar tune into her ears, and Ava couldn't help but sing one last time for her mother.

They could always come home to Kalokairi, as Ben had.

I believe in angels

Something good in everything I see

I believe in angels, when I know the time is right for me

I'll cross the stream

I have a dream

I'll cross the stream

"I have a dream..."

Notes for the Chapter:

The end < 3